

STRENGTHENING FAMILY RESILIENCY AMONG MILITARY PILOTS

A THESIS-PROJECT

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To my bride whose unwavering support has allowed me to pursue my dreams.

To my children and their children after them.

To my God, my Rock and my Redeemer.

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I am also grateful to my sons, John and William. In their young lives, they have been transplanted to live on an active Air Force base and now, each month, they watch their daddy leave for a weekend to “teach people about Jesus.” When asked, “What is our family about?” John answered, “You’re a chaplain, we help people.” I am so proud of the brave hearts in both of my sons. *“Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s youth.” ~ Psalm 127:4*

My life has been incredibly blessed through the teaching, encouragement and friendship of Dr. Jim Critchlow. Over twenty years ago, he tutored me through Biblical Greek and he has been shaping my skills, and even more importantly, my character ever since. Much of the servant leadership that I am privileged to provide today is a result his mentorship in my life. *“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others” ~ 2 Timothy 2:2*

Serving as a military chaplain is an honor, privilege and, often, a pleasure. My readiness to serve as a chaplain and as a military officer has been incredibly enhanced through the servant

leadership of Dr. Alan “Blues” Baker. Having a mentor with his wisdom, experience, and depth of insight has been a true blessing throughout this program. *“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” ~ Proverbs 27:17*

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Soli Deo Gloria

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis-project is to design a training guide which teaches family resiliency skills to military pilots. The objective is to present available material on the topic of family resiliency in a way which is relatable to members of this military career field. Through research conducted with current and former military pilots, a review of available literature and analysis of identified needs, the most applicable material was identified. This material was then contextualized and used to develop a training guide for military pilots which is both engaging and insightful.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Introduction

The most cited statistic for divorce in the United States is 50%. This statistic is derived by dividing the number of marriages in a year by the number of divorces. This statistic includes all marriages, second, third or more. However, it is possible to examine this statistic at a more detailed level. With greater analysis, it can be seen that the more accurate statistic is 25% of the population has been divorced. This number is the number that is found when 1,000 people are randomly asked if they have been divorced in the United States.¹

Within the world of professional pilots, the divorce rate is astonishingly higher. The majority of military pilots today are transitioning to civilian airline positions at the end of their service commitments. With a long term study as a goal, the statistics in this career field can be used to project the long term expected rate of marital breakdown among today's military pilots. Most airlines now have nearly seven out of ten pilots who have been previously married, go home to either an empty house or the wife of their second (some even third or more) marriage.² The goal of this thesis-project is to transfer the available source material which has been developed for deployed military members, contextualize the material and to present it to military pilots. For the purpose of this thesis-project the target audience is military pilots. However, the final product will have broader application to all professional pilots. This will enable the already existing outstanding material available to be used in a career field that is experiencing both common military lifestyle stressors as well as significant additional stressors related to their career field.

1. John Babler, "Course Introduction" (class lecture, Marriage and Family Counseling, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX, January 17, 2005).

2. Sven Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*. (Maitland, FL: Zimmer Aerogistics, 2014), 2.

Motivation for the Thesis-Project

The origins of this thesis-project are found in my professional background. Over the past twelve years, I have had the opportunity to serve as a member of the US Air Force's chaplain corps in the Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard and on active duty. During this time, I have served military pilots and other aviators as the primary chaplain to the 305th Air Mobility Wing and 136th Airlift Wing. The 305th Air Mobility Wing is an active duty Air Force wing made up of approximately 1,000 military members including pilots, boom operators, flight engineers and many aviation support personnel. It is located at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in central New Jersey and composed of three flying squadrons and one operational support squadron. Prior to and since completing this full-time active duty assignment, I have served bi-vocationally as the primary chaplain to the 136th Airlift Group of the Texas Air National Guard located in Fort Worth, Texas. This is an operational flying group consisting of approximately 220 total personnel. The pilots are a mixture of full-time and part-time military pilots. Approximately 25% of the group serves full time to maintain the "frame" of the unit while the other 75% serve part-time. As part-time military pilots, they incur significant additional military time commitments in order to maintain their aviation qualifications. The majority of these pilots also hold positions as civilian airline pilots.

Over the years, I have developed a passion for coordinating and leading marriage and family seminars for military members. Following many years of engagement in Afghanistan, Iraq, the broader Middle East and Africa, military families have experienced extreme stress due to frequent separations. In military terminology, this is referred to as high OPSTEMPO. As a result, the military has spent millions of dollars over the years to develop family resilience materials and for conducting multi-day seminars for singles, couples and families to develop

relationship resilience. The chaplain corps has the responsibility to organize and lead these resiliency seminars. I have observed that the attendance rates of military pilots is lower than the rest of the Air Force. It is my belief that this is due to several factors including continual travel as a result of their career field and a cultural identity of “toughness” which leads to a lack of willingness to be seen at these types of events.

On the civilian side of my bi-vocational career, I work as a professional pilot. For eleven years, I was a pilot for a large regional airline and then transitioned to become a professional instructor pilot. As part of my career, I train hundreds of professional pilots each year. Many of my students and co-workers are former or current bi-vocational military pilots. It is primarily from this pool of pilots, that I will be conducting informational interviews. I have found that, as with many things in life, age brings increased maturity and improved perspective about relationships. Many of these pilots have had the time to make lifestyle and relationship decisions and to have experienced the consequences of those decisions, both positive and negative. Their stories provide valuable insights into the best practices for handling the unique challenges of this career field.

The goal of this thesis-project is not to “reinvent the wheel” of the available material on marriage and family resiliency. The goal is to synthesize the abundance of material, contextualize it for those in the pilot career field and package it in a way that is readily accessible. The process of completing this task will include a thorough review of available literature and material already being presented to military members. Informational interviews with military pilots will also be conducted, focusing particularly on those who have completed their military careers. The reason for this focus on those who have already completed their career is to examine the best practices of those who have done it well and to gather the counsel

of those whose marriages have not weathered the storms as well.

A Concise History of Family Breakdown in the United States

In the early history of our own country, while it was still a group of colonies located on the frontier of a New World, divorce was rarely mentioned among historical writings. There were frequent devastating challenges faced by families. Early death and the resulting need for re-marriage was common. However, the mention of divorce was rare. A case study of the types of family challenges prevalent in this historical era can be seen when examining the collected writings of our founding father, George Washington. In his writings, there are mentions of his own crushing familial challenges. There are recollections of his own transplant as a youth to the family of his much older brother Lawrence after the death of Washington's father. When Washington married, he adopted the children of his wife who was a widow. Eventually, his step-daughter died in his arms during an epileptic seizure. His step-son died from disease which he contracted following the Battle of Yorktown. Immediately upon his step-son's death, Washington announced to those gathered that he was adopting the children of his step-son. He raised these children as if they were his own. Tragedy and family hardship was a part of life in the early history of our country.

Yet, divorce as a common feature of society is a relatively new occurrence within American history. It is worth an examination of the evolution of this phenomenon and an attempt to understand the societal causes of its emergence as a common feature of society. The industrial revolution beginning in the mid to late 1700's led to a vast and dramatic shift in the way that life and family was done in much of American society. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, America was primarily an agrarian culture. The model of the family farm where family roles were largely similar to how they had been for thousands of years were replaced by a

new model where work and family life became geographically separate entities.

Perhaps the best marker in American history to begin an in-depth examination of the implication of this seismic shift in American society on family life is the Great Depression of the 1930's. During this devastating time in American history, when one in four families lacked a full-time income stream, stress on families became exceedingly high. In many instances, men had to leave their families to participate in the Works Progress Administration in order to provide an income for the rest of their family. Research on this time has shown that some families came out of the 30's stronger while other families didn't survive the stress and broke apart. These studies showed that those families that were strong going into the Depression became stronger while those with pre-existing problems broke apart. The familial stressors of the Great Depression were supplanted by the stressors of the Second World War in the 1940's. During this enormous conflict many husbands and sons were lost. In addition to the terrible emotional pain accompanying these deaths, there was also the difficult reality that this also meant the loss of mentors, providers and protectors.

These stressors created a profound interest in family life as a response to the times that preceded it. The generation which had endured these trials, often referred to as the Builder Generation, did not want their children to experience the pain and tragedy which had marked their childhood. During the time of their prime child-rearing years, the wind did seem to be at the back of family life. American GNP increased 350% and the average family income increased by 35%. However, the wounds of the 1930's and 1940's had left emotional scars on many members of the Builder Generation which they carried into their family life. Since so many had suffered, the cultural norm at that time was to not show emotions nor to emote difficulties in public settings. However, beneath the surface, there was a troubling undercurrent

of a high rate of alcoholism as people sought to self-medicate their woundedness. Although not commonly reported, there were also significant rates of physical and sexual abuse.

As the next generation of Americans came of age in the 1960's, there was a widespread rejection of the stated ideals of the previous generation. There was a strong reversal of the ideals of trust in leaders and an unquestioning following of those in authority. There was also a reversal of the ideal of keeping emotions and strong feelings private. What is observed is a sense of the younger generation feeling an apparent hypocrisy in the publicly stated values of the prior generation and their actual family life. It appears that although there was a strong desire among the Builder Generation to have strong family lives as a result of their own challenges in childhood, they lacked the skill sets to achieve their stated goals. The Baby Boomer generation, in their youth, interpreted this as hypocrisy, when in fact, it was more a result of lack of healthy modeling and training.

All of this led to the legalization of no-fault divorce, first passed as law in California in 1968. Within two years of the passing of this law, the rate of divorce within California increased six-fold. This paved the way for similar legislation within other states and rates of divorce began to skyrocket across the United States. As mentioned above, the most cited statistic for divorce is 50%. However, a more accurate statistic is that 25% of the population has been divorced. This number is the number that is found when 1,000 people are randomly asked if they have been divorced in the United States. Among these statistics 50% (1/2) of divorces will happen within seven years of marriage, another 19% will happen within the first five years of marriage. 75% of these divorcees will choose to re-marry with 2/3 of these second marriages ending in divorce.³

3. Babler, "Course Introduction."

There are numerous marriage and family counselors who are working to alleviate this rate of marital breakdown. However, most couples who choose to pursue marriage counseling do not begin until they are six to seven years into their marriage. During counseling, many couples report that the presenting problems which first led them to counseling began to be observed within six months of marriage.⁴ It seems that by the time that couples choose to pursue marriage counseling that too much damage to the relationship has occurred. It would seem that the most effective solution to this challenge is to develop skills among couples at the early stages of their relationship.

The Target Population – Military Pilots

As of the writing of this thesis-project, the strain of high OPSTEMPO (Operations Tempo) and an abundance of civilian aviation jobs is leading to a mass exodus of military pilots after the completion of their service commitments. The reasons given for the continual stream of military pilots choosing to separate from active duty are a culture of continual deployments, a desire to establish geographical stability and increased financial options in the civilian aviation market. Among the Air Force's airlift community the current deployment cycle is a two-to-one dwell ratio, meaning that the pilots spend two months away from home followed by four months at home, indefinitely. During the four months at home, there are continual shorter trips ranging in length from days to weeks. This cycle continues throughout a pilot's prime operational years. These prime operational years for a typical pilot are the first eight to ten years of their career. Among the Reserve and Air National Guard communities, deployments must be integrated into civilian career demands as well as family commitments. As an example, one member of the 136th Airlift Wing of the Texas Air National Guard spent his 30th birthday deployed and then his

4. Babler, "Course Introduction."

40th birthday deployed while engaged in the same conflict. All of these demands come at a cost of family cohesion and resiliency.

Causes of Marital Breakdown Among the General Population

Most people desire to be in a loving, committed relationship which continues to prosper through the years. However, what can begin with a beautiful wedding ceremony can devolve into a continual series of frustrations, arguments and emotional turmoil. Research has shown that the damaging effects of marital breakdown include economic problems, medical problems and mental health problems. Yet, those who can persevere and commit to the hard work of cultivating a thriving marriage enjoy longer lives, better health and do better financially according to statistics.⁵

The operating premise of divorce prevention programs is to equip couples to combat the stressors which lead to marital breakdown that can be found in many relationships. However, the goal of any such program is not only to prevent total marital breakdown but also to help the many couples who live in stable but stressed relationships. Many of these couples can endure years of stress and dysfunction which can be either averted or more effectively managed. Sadly, research has shown that of those marriages that do not end in divorce, less than 50 percent are truly happy marriages. This high distress level among couples can lead to personal distress, dislocation of lives, vulnerability to physical and mental disorders and growing strain on social institutions.⁶

5. Scott M. Stanley, Howard J. Markman, Natalie H. Jenkins, and Susan L. Blumberg. *PREP Leader Manual Version 7.0* (Greenwood Village, CO: PREP Educational Products, Inc., 2008), 11.

6. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 13.

Clearly, divorce has become a social problem which has not been dealt with adequately. Consumer Report, in a survey of consumers, found that of all the problems for which people seek counseling, marriage counseling and addiction had the least successful outcomes. Only about fifty percent of the clients who seek professional counseling for their troubled marriages emerge with well-functioning marriages that last over three years.⁷ For this reason, most counsellors dread dealing with troubled marriages even though troubled marriages often form the majority of their caseload.⁸

Standard approaches to treating marital distress provide interventions after problems have developed, when negative effects on spouses and children may already be in evidence. This thesis-project follows the course of providing an alternative approach. The goal is to teach competencies associated with successful adjustment before problems develop.⁹ However, before this can be accomplished the challenges must be understood and examined.

Stages of How Marriages Fall Apart

While there is not a singular pathway to marital distress or divorce, a comprehensive model exists which reflects a common path to marital failure based on findings from many different studies on marriage and relationships. In this model, two people initially become attracted to one another out of the mix of similarities, differences, and proximity. As time is spent together that is satisfying, a sense of attachment grows between the two people. Along with this bond comes a sense of anxiety over the potential loss of the loved one. In this context,

7. Worthington Jr, Everett L. *Hope Focused Marriage Counseling* (Downers Grove, IL InterVarsity Press, 1999), 19.

8. Worthington, *Hope Focused Marriage Counseling*, 20.

9. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 13.

commitment develops, in large measure to remove this anxiety by the promise of a future together. For many couples, this commitment culminates in marriage.¹⁰

Prior to the wedding day, most first time married couples have had few tests of their ability to handle conflict. They simply have not encountered many significant issues or disagreements during courtship. That is partly why satisfaction tends to be very high at this stage. Yet, there's clear evidence that how couples communicate and handle conflict foretells an important story about their future, and is more important than their premarital level of satisfaction. Over time, this committed couple must increasingly deal with the problems of life together. This explains why so many couples can start out so committed and so happy only to find their attachment being eroded by the constant dripping of unresolved and upsetting conflicts.

Negative interpretations about the spouse can become commonplace as a "me versus you" environment takes hold. These negative interpretations lead each to consistently interpret the actions of the other as more negative than is warranted. Confidence erodes and the sense of attachment that led to commitment in the first place becomes more fragile. In fact, it has been observed that many couples will begin regularly threatening the future of the relationship, as commitment becomes a pawn to be sacrificed in the heat of tormenting conflicts.¹¹

Ultimately, the marriage becomes a shell of its former state, with the view each spouse holds of the other changed from the courtship and early days of marriage. In this case, the initial view becomes harder and harder to reinstate. At this point, the keys to the stability of the marriage lie less in commitment displayed as a dedication to maintain the relationship and more in commitment displayed as constraint from acting on maladaptive thoughts. In other words,

10. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 22.

11. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 22.

decisions to stay or leave now have more to do with the costs of leaving than the desire to stay. As constraints keeping marriages together weaken in society, couples who get to this point are increasingly likely to divorce. In the past, many couples in similar situations stayed together in stable, miserable marriages. Of course, some couples rebound from this place of high constraint and low dedication to re-develop dedication, love, and positivity in their marriages.¹²

As stressors continue to build in a marriage relationship the risk of marital and resultant family breakdown increases. A tragic cycle begins where negative interactions prevent a couple from being open to positive interactions. Eventually, a spouse may either consciously or subconsciously cease to make it a priority to invest the time or energy required to foster positive interactions. Understanding this cycle is important because it is not only the presence of high negatives that is related to marital failure but the absence of a strong positive bond as well. In fact, research shows that negative interaction is most corrosive in marriages when there is also an absence of an ability to foster positive interactions to offset them. Inversely, the ability to talk supportively at other times and the ability to be supportive (and positively connected) mitigates the impact of negative interaction on marriages.¹³ When the ratio of positive to negative interactions drops below five to one, the marriage suffers drastic deterioration. Partners begin to view the relationship as basically negative.¹⁴ Once this level is reached, it is very difficult for a marriage to recover. Unfortunately, it is only at this stage in the breakdown of the marriage that a typical couple will seek professional help often with unfortunate rates of success. The primary method of intervention with marital stress is to treat relationship problems after they have

12. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 19.

13. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 19.

14. Worthington. *Hope Focused Marriage Counseling*, 47.

become severe enough for the couple to seek therapy. Usually, by this time there have already been negative effects on spouses and children. Even for those who seek help, research suggests that most couples in therapy usually become less distressed but not necessarily happy.¹⁵

Often times, at this stage one or both spouses will have begun to have their relationship needs met in another person. Extra-marital affairs are often an outcome of this cycle, they do not precede it. "You almost always quickly discover that the process that led to an affair began a long time ago. When you can identify these signs, which eventually begin to crumble a relationship, you will recognize them when they come up and will be able to mitigate them. It's much easier to fight an enemy that you can see than one that is hidden among you."¹⁶

Contributing Factors to Marital Stress

Numerous factors have been shown to increase the risk of marital breakdown. Factors shown to increase risk include, but are not limited to, wives' employment and income, neuroticism, premarital cohabitation, difficulties in the areas of leisure activities and sexual relations, physiological arousal prior to problem-solving discussions, parental divorce, previous divorce, communication positivity versus negativity, communication withdrawal and invalidation, defensiveness, higher ratios of hostility to warmth, dissatisfaction with spouses' personality and habits, religious dissimilarity, maintaining separate finances, knowing the spouse a short time before marriage, marrying young, one spouse being less conscientious than the other, problems relating to friends and family, low or differing levels of education and having

15. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 14.

16. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 74.

dissimilar attitudes.¹⁷ The list of challenges that a couple can face in their marriage is daunting and, for some, scary.

Since the goal of this thesis-project is to follow the model of teaching couples how to better mitigate and manage stress in a family context, these stressors must be thoroughly understood. These stressors can be classified as static or dynamic. Static stress factors in a marriage are personality traits and situations that are hard or impossible to change once married. Dynamic stress factors can be mitigated through training in order to reduce stress levels in a marriage context. The focus of many marriage enrichment programs is in reducing the dynamic stress factors in the marriage relationship.

Relatively STATIC FACTORS that are hard to change once married:

- * Having a personality tendency to react strongly to problems and
disappointments
- * Having divorced parents
- * Living together prior to marriage
- * Being previously divorced, yourself, or your spouse
- * Having children from a previous marriage
- * Having different religious backgrounds
- * Marrying at a very young age (for example, at the age of 18 or 19; the average
currently is about 25 or 26 years of age for first marriages)
- * Knowing each other only for a short time before marriage
- * Experiencing financial hardship

17. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 18.

- * Having major mental health problems

DYNAMIC FACTORS that couples can change to improve their odds:

- * Negative styles of talking and fighting with each other, such as arguments that rapidly become negative, put downs, and the silent treatment
- * Difficulty communicating well, especially when there are disagreements
- * Trouble handling disagreements as a team
- * Unrealistic beliefs about marriage
- * Lower levels of supportiveness between spouses
- * Having different attitudes about important matters
- * A low level of commitment to one another, reflected in such things as not protecting your relationship from others you are attracted to, or failing to view your marriage as a long-term investment.¹⁸

Methods of Marital Counseling

Many professionals have presented the rationale for the placement of relationship intervention at the premarital stage. They suggest that the family life cycle can be thought of as a developmental track with appropriate tasks and stressors to be dealt with at each stage or time of transition. For example, the transition to marriage stage has its own set of specific developmental tasks. These include development of constructive communication and conflict resolution skills, development of realistic and compatible attitudes and expectations about marriage and relationships, and development of behavioral and communication patterns that satisfy the basic emotional and psychological needs of each spouse.¹⁹

18. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 20.

19. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 13.

For example, what a couple argues about and how they argue is a function of both expectations and their abilities to communicate and negotiate effectively. The level of the development of these skills is based on previous experiences in life, family of origin, past relationships, and the cultural context. Unfortunately, without prior positive modelling, certain patterns of mismanaged conflict which are destructive for relationships will be repeatedly expressed in many couples. Without effective training in relationship skills, a very significant change occurs over time in the relationship: the presence of the spouse becomes increasingly associated with pain and frustration, not pleasure or support. For most couples, this violates a basic assumption about what being together is about - having a most intimate and supportive friend for life.²⁰

This model of marital failure suggests a number of targets for intervention. These include certain patterns of communication, conflict management, dysfunctional beliefs, and understandings and motivations regarding commitment. The good news is that couples are not predestined to this path of destruction. There are things they can learn and act on to stay off the path of failure and on the path of friendship, support, and intimacy. The challenge is that many of these skills and attitudes are anything but natural for most couples.²¹ Can couples learn how to avoid the pitfalls, and learn to deepen and maintain love for a lifetime? Yes, if they work at it - and if they keep working at the things that work for them.²²

20. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 22.

21. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 23.

22. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 11.

Unique Causes of Marital Breakdown Among Pilots

Having spent the majority of my adult life as a professional pilot, I can say that it is hard, it's really hard. Due to career opportunities in the present climate, the overwhelming majority of today's military pilots are completing their initial flight training commitment and transitioning to become civilian professional pilots. With this dynamic in place, it is possible to look at the available statistics of career professional pilots to forecast the long-term relationship trajectory of many of today's military pilots. Most airlines now have nearly seven out of ten pilots who have been previously married, go home to either an empty house or the wife of their second (some even third or more) marriage.²³ The question becomes, if military pilots are a target population which, when compared to the general population, have higher education levels, more developed leadership and social skills then why is their rate of marital breakdown significantly higher than their peers?

As has been observed, "Most of these pilots are extremely intelligent, have remarkable backgrounds and are the nicest people. Many of these pilots have fought in wars defending their country, flown at speeds faster than sound in parts of the world I can't even pronounce. How is it that these amazing individuals can accomplish so much but yet fall victim to another divorce?" Is it really that difficult? Why do some stay married their entire career, yet others in the same profession get divorced after 30 years? Can it really be that more than 75 percent of us make horrible decisions when picking a spouse?"²⁴

There are many ideas circulating among pilots as to why there is such a high rate of marital breakdown. During informational interviews, comments have been made such as, "Is it

23. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 2.

24. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 17.

because we are gone from home for too long?” “How about the cheating factor?” “Do our relationships suffer from more divorces as a result of affairs and unfaithfulness? If so, is it the fact that we are away from home and that there is more opportunity to cheat?” “Could it be our personalities that lead us into temptations?”²⁵

After numerous years of observation, informational interviews and analysis, I have come to the conclusion that there are four main contributors to the high divorce rate among pilots. These four contributors are (1) lifestyle, (2) over-emphasis on career, (3) authority issues, and (4) personality patterns.

Lifestyle

Schedules of military pilots can vary depending on the platform or type of aircraft that a person is assigned. In the Air Force, for example, many fighter units are executing a “six-on-six-off” schedule – they are gone for six months, then home for six months before leaving again. Tanker and transport pilots also continue to see high workloads. Their schedules follow a two-to-one “dwell ratio.” This translates into a continual lifestyle of two months of deployment followed by four months at home station on a continual basis. During times at home station there are constant shorter length trips usually lasting from several days to weeks. It is not uncommon for a pilot assigned to these types of aircraft to be gone 250 to 300 days out of the year. Over time, this OPSTEMPO can take a toll, especially on those with families. There has been significant research done on the emotional and psychological effects that a high OPSTEMPO can have on the families of those who deploy.

25. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 88.

This pattern of intense times away from family followed by intense time with family can create a disruptive social pattern if the family unit does not adapt adequately to the rhythmic nature of their social interactions. There can come a point in a pilot's career where they begin to realize that they and their spouse are living in parallel but separate worlds. For this reason, it has been observed that for this lifestyle to be sustained and to maintain the security of the marriage relationship that, "whomever you end up with needs to be independent and able to run things while you are away. Trust is also vital to any relationship that is to endure our careers."²⁶

It has been observed that marriages that start while already in this career usually have a higher success rate than those that started before beginning that type of lifestyle. Many military couples find that a transition to a civilian aviation career track reduces stress on their marriage significantly simply because they are used to longer periods of time apart from their spouses. Even a two-week trip once they transition to a civilian aviation career is a significantly easier burden when compared to 60 days away on deployment. Counter to this observation, couples who meet in college face a more difficult challenge when, after college, one of them goes off to become a military pilot. They are used to one lifestyle in which they see each other often. Some are able to adapt and do great while others find it far more difficult. In this situation, a prospective married couple must recognize their capability in what they are willing to deal with in a relationship, and then they must stay true to those limitations."²⁷

This lifestyle is also difficult on children. The children of pilots know that when daddy goes to work, mommy's²⁸ rules are back in play (or vice versa), and they can adjust to them once

26. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 84.

27. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 87.

28. Gender language for this statement is representative but not exclusive.

the pilot leaves again. The spouses of pilots have shared that it was frustrating to have their pilot come home because they would have their own schedule to get things done and the minute the pilot walked in the door they would take over. Then to top things off, they could sense the disappointment in their pilot and that would make them even more frustrated. Instead of the pilot focusing on what a great job their spouse did the entire time they were gone, they would focus on the things that weren't done when they expected them to be done. The spouses have said that they would run things just fine when their pilot was gone away on trips. On the opposite side of the situation, the pilots have said that they felt like they would have to work while away, and then also have to work while at home. These are just some of the friction points that the military pilot lifestyle can generate.

Over-Emphasis on Career

Another observation of the stressors that military pilot families face is an over-emphasis on career. It has been said, "the aviation industry is very much like Disney World. It's unique and special, lots of people want to go there and it costs an arm and a leg to get in."²⁹ Although the level of competitiveness for a military pilot position varies over years due to the prevailing political climate and need, it is never easy to obtain a pilot slot. Once the slot is awarded, it can take between two to three years of intensive training before a young person is ready to fly their first operational mission. There is a tremendous amount of passion among military pilots for their craft. During an informational interview, one pilot summed it up this way, "flying puts you in control of a machine that puts you in a transcended spot between time and space. That is where you have been and where you will always long to be. But that is not life."

29. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 116.

Authority Issues

Another issue that seems to be a common challenge among the families of military pilots is that pilots tend to, “like structure and organization; it's how we operate in a cockpit and comes natural to us.”³⁰ As an aircraft commander or even more so as a mission commander, the pilot sets the tone and they are in charge, people look up to them for guidance, and not much goes on without their being informed of it.”³¹ When pilots fly airplanes, or are part of a crew, they are basically actors in a play. They have a precise “script,” they learn and memorize it, and then they go perform. Rarely do circumstances call for us to totally venture off the script.”³² This can be in stark contrast to a family with young children. To spend a significant amount of time functioning in one type of environment and then to have to adjust rapidly to a radically different type of environment creates a lot of friction and straining of relationships. So how do people achieve peace? How can they change from one situation to another with their behavior, especially since they are in a career that requires them to act one way at work that is different from how they would act with people in a personal environment? That is a tough question. Many people do not change and bring home their behaviors from work. They find out that those behaviors that are the rules for success at work do not apply to rules for success at home. Therefore, they do not have good relationships at home. On the other hand, people who have learned how to think of work rules and home rules of behavior separately do very well in relationships. It is a learned skill to switch behaviors to what fits at home. How they treat others, particularly the people who are their loved ones, when no one is looking especially

30. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 57.

31. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 117.

32. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 173.

defines their values. It is important to separate work from home in a career that demands a person be tough and follow rules from leadership. Relationship skills can improve honor and respect in both work and home.³³

Personality Traits

As was said by an Air Force pilot and wing commander when talking to him about this thesis-project, “pilots are ego-maniacs.” Military pilots are where they are today because of their personality. They are determined, focused, and motivated to accomplish what they set out to do. Otherwise, they would have quit the pursuit of this career a long time ago. For the majority, they were focused for a long time on the pursuit of this career, finally obtaining their dream job. The challenge for them when they begin to raise a family, is that instead of letting go of their motivation to reach this goal, they must try to redirect that same motivation to their personal lives. As one pilot has written, "here is where one of the greatest challenges stems from in our lives. Our personality is driven on planning, seeing things that need to be done and doing them. We often times come home, and since we have been in charge, feel like that can continue at home. But I've got news for you, that just simply doesn't work. It's not fair to your spouse, not fair to the kids, and not fair to you."³⁴ The people who truly and honestly learn to be self-aware of these personality traits and seek to learn and make the necessary changes, are usually the ones who have the "happily ever after."³⁵

33. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 16.

34. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 119.

35. Zimmer. *First Class Marriage*, 73.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Many have courageously taken up Joshua's bold declaration, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD," only to discover that they do not know *how* to do this or *what* it looks like. The goal of this thesis-project is to equip military pilots and their families to answer these questions. Through equipping these families, it is possible that the larger military community as a whole can be blessed because God ordained that the family is the fountainhead of all cultures. It is the primary place on earth that culture is made, and it is formational of all other cultures. As such, God created the family as an important element in the outworking of His eternal purpose in a variety of ways. First, God created the family to give structure and order to the relationships between human beings that He made in His image. Second, the family provides the essential labor of teaching and preparation of children for churches, communities, cultures, and nations. Third, God created the family in order to pass the gospel from one generation to the next. Finally, God designed the family to be a living demonstration of various aspects of the glory of the gospel and the embodiment of biblical truths. It is hardly possible to overemphasize the role of the family in the plans of God.¹ As a military chaplain, with a call to serve as a 'visible reminder of the Holy,'² to military pilots, it is important to be able to articulate these truths to those who seek to fulfill Joshua's bold declaration in their own lives and families.

1. Jeff Pollard and Scott T. Brown. *A Theology of the Family*. (Wake Forest, NC: The National Center for Family-Integrated Churches, 2014), 34.

2. This phrase was written into US Air Force Regulation 265-1, which defined and regulates the Air Force Chaplain Corps to this day.

A Theology of the Family

When God does something wonderful in the world, He often uses a family. When God wanted the wilderness tamed and the garden tended, He instructed a family composed of Adam and Eve to take dominion over it (Gen 1:28). When God wanted to preserve His righteous seed from destruction as He carried out judgment on a wicked world, He chose Noah and his family to preserve the human lineage that is in place to this day (Gen 8:10). When He wanted to bless the world with the righteousness that is by faith alone, He chose Abraham, in whose family all the families of the nations would be blessed (Gen 12:1-3; 15; 17; 22:17; Hab 2:4; Gal 3:7-9; Rom 3:21-26, 30; 4:1-4; 5:1). When God wanted to bring salvation to mankind, He sent His only begotten Son and His Son created a family – the family of God (Gal 6:10). He established His Church, which is composed of spiritual brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers. This family is “the church of the living God,” which is “the pillar and ground of the truth.” (1 Tim 3:15). Followers of Jesus are baptized into this family, literally into “the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:16-28). When a person takes the name of Christ at baptism they are being welcomed into a new family. Surely, all of human history revolves around God’s working through families.³

A Theology of Marriage

With the one exception of personal conversion, marriage is the most momentous of all earthly events in the life of a man or woman. It forms a bond that binds them until death bringing them into such an intimate relationship that they must either sweeten or embitter each other’s existence. The apostle Paul reveals in Ephesians 5:22-33 that God created marriage for a very particular purpose: to visibly declare the glory of the love of Jesus Christ for His Church.

3. Pollard and Brown, *Theology of the Family*, 34.

Christ's love for the Church is summarized in a picture of a husband saving a bride, giving his life up for her, loving her, sanctifying her, and glorifying her. Following this example, Paul asserts that the love of Christ in the redemption of sinners is the pattern for the way husbands ought to love their wives. While no husband can save his wife's soul, his life with her is a picture of the redemption that is found in Christ. Yet these words only begin to communicate the importance of marriage. The entire story of redemption is revealed using family terminology. The Bible begins with the marriage of Adam and Eve (Gen 2:20-24) and ends with the marriage supper of the Lamb where the bride – the Church – is married to her husband (Rev 19:7-9). God has ordained the joining of man and woman together in wedlock for the strengthening of their lives, for “two are better than one” (Eccl 4:9). Therefore, when God made the woman for the man, He said, “I will make him a help mate for him” (Gen 2:18), showing that man is advantaged by having a wife. Understanding this origin of marriage reveals that marriage is honorable because God Himself has placed special honor upon it. All other ordinances or institutions (except the Sabbath) were appointed by God through men or angels (Acts 7:35), but marriage was ordained directly by God Himself – no man or angel brought the first wife to her husband (Gen 2:22). Marriage has more divine honor put upon it than all of the other divine institutions because it was directly inaugurated by God Himself. In fact, the inauguration of marriage between the first man and woman was done while they were still in their unfallen state. Even the place where the first marriage occurred shows the honorableness of this institution. While all other institutions (except the Sabbath) were instituted outside of paradise, marriage was inaugurated in Eden itself.

Marriage was designed by God to fulfill multiple purposes. God made both the male and the female in His image, each with a special role and each complemented by the other. He

joined them together and said, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh” (Gen 2:24). Marriage was to be a permanent covenantal commitment of two people that excluded all others from its intimacy. God expressly forbade the breaking of that union when He gave the commandment, “You shall not commit adultery” (Exod 20:14). The New Testament reaffirms the uniqueness of the marriage bond when Jesus said that a man and his wife “are no more two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together let no man separate” (Matt 19:6). Paul beautifully compared the love of a man for his wife to the love of Christ for His church (Eph 5:25). He said that Christ’s love was so deep that He died for the church, and in the same way a man’s love for his wife should overcome any sense of the imperfections she may have. Marriage is more than a contract that two people make for their mutual benefit. Since they make their marriage vows in God’s presence and in His name, they may draw power from God to fulfill those vows. Proverbs affirms this fact when it says that God gives wisdom, discretion, and understanding so that marriage partners can avoid being lured into unfaithfulness (Prov 2:6-16). This supernatural power from God allows a Christ-centered marriage to fulfill its’ multiple purposes.⁴

Marked by Love

The primary purpose of marriage is love. Above all else, love is to mark the marriage union. As scripture describes the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah, “[He] took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her” (Gen 24:67). Love, based on true friendship and respect, seals and sustains the marriage bond. Both husband and wife have the obligation to act out of that love, though they may have varying degrees of ability to perform the responsibilities they share. When this kind of love exists between a husband and wife it purifies their marriage

4. Arthur W. Pink, “The Excellence of Marriage.” in *A Theology of the Family*, ed. Jeff Pollard and Scott T. Brown (Wake Forest, NC: The National Center for Family-Integrated Churches, 2014), 214.

relationship. Together they receive God's gifts and blessings for their marriage (Rom 4:18-21; Heb 11:11; 1 Pet 3:5-7).

Sexually Fulfilling

Another purpose of the marriage relationship is the sexual union of the partners. Sexual union consummates the marriage on the basis of a mutual matrimonial commitment. The expression, "he knew his wife" (Gen 4:1, 25), is the Bible's discreet way of referring to sexual intercourse. The Bible treats this act with dignity, calling it honorable and undefiled (Heb 13:4). Scripture calls on God's people to keep their sexual relations pure. They are not to use sex to fulfill lustful passions, as the ungodly do (1 Thess 4:3-7). Scripture encourages a married man to delight in the wife of his youth all his life (Eccl 9:9). He is to be "ravished always with her love" (Prov 5:15-19).

Marriage as a Spiritual Symbol

Ultimately, marriage symbolizes the union between God and His people. Israel was called the Lord's wife and the Lord Himself said, "I was a husband to them" (Jer 31:32; Isa 54:5). Prophets declared that the nation had committed "fornication" and "adultery" when it turned from God to idols (Num 25:1; Judg 2:17; Jer 3:20; Ezek 16:17; Hos 1:2). They said that God had divorced his "unfaithful wife" (Isa 50:1; Jer 3:8) when He sent the Israelites away into captivity. Yet, God had compassion on His "wife," Israel, and called "her" back to be faithful (Isa 54). As a bridegroom delights in his bride (Isa 62:4-5), so the Lord delighted to make Israel the "holy people," His redeemed ones (Isa 62:12).

The New Testament describes the church as the bride of Christ, preparing herself for life in the eternal kingdom (Eph 5:23). This image reveals the truth that marriage ought to be an exclusive and permanent union of love and fidelity. Husbands should love their wives as Christ

loves His ransomed bride, and wives should submit to their husbands, as they submit to Christ. Although the idea of submitting can sound demeaning to some modern readers, this was not the intention of this passage. The submission of a Jewish woman to her husband did not depreciate her abilities or demote her to a secondary place in society. The “excellent” wife of the Old Testament (Prov 31) enjoyed the confidence of her husband and the respect of her children and neighbors. She had a great deal of freedom to use her economic skills to provide for her family. She was recognized as a person of wisdom and a gracious teacher. She was as far as possible from being regarded as a servant.⁵ This mutual love and submission serves as a visible symbol of the love between God and his children.

A Theology of Children

Immediately after God created the heavens and earth, He created an earthly husband and wife (Gen 2:20-24). He instructed the husband and wife that He had created to reproduce more families by being fruitful and multiplying (Gen 1:27-28). As can be seen throughout scripture, not only do marriages provide a picture of the gospel of God’s grace on earth, but so do the relationships between children and parents. God is a father (John 14:10; Eph 4:6; Phil 2:11; Col 1:19; 1 Pet 1:2); His family is united (Deut 6:41; Matt 28:19; John 15:26; Gal 3:20; 1 John 5:7); He has a son (John 3:16-17; 1 Cor 1:3; Eph 1:3; Col 1:3; Heb 1:1-2; 1 Pet 1:3); and He has children who are born of the Spirit (Gal 3:26; 1 John 2:28-3:3); these children are brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers in the family of God (Rom 12:5; 1 Tim 5:1-2; 1 John 3:14); they are members of God’s household on earth (John 14:2-3).⁶ The very first command of God was,

5. J.I. Packer, Merrill C. Tenney, and William White Jr., *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Facts* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), 434.

6. Pollard and Brown, *Theology of the Family*, 34.

“be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it” (Gen 1:28). The couples in biblical times took this command seriously and so should each believer today. God’s command in Genesis 1:28 is surely one of the greatest of all privileges and blessings.

Biblical Examples of Standing for the Family

Scripture is filled with stories of Godly parents making a stand for the spiritual well-being of their families. Abraham, the father of the faithful and the friend of God (Jas 2:23), set an example of Godly devotion for his family. Wherever he pitched his tent, he also built “an altar there to the Lord” (Gen 12:7; 13:4). God promised to bless Abraham for his domestic piety. “For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.” (Gen 18:19) Another example is the pious determination of Joshua, who declared to Israel, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh 24:15). Neither the exalted station that he held nor the pressing public duties that were placed upon him were allowed to crowd out his attention to the spiritual well-being of his family. When David brought back the ark of the Lord to Jerusalem with joy and thanksgiving, after discharging his public duties, he “returned to bless his household” (2 Sam 6:20). Job offered sacrifices on behalf of his children for any sins against God that they may have committed in their hearts (Job 1:5). Scripture records that making sacrifices on behalf of his children was Job’s regular custom. “Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, ‘Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.’ This was Job’s regular custom” (Job 1:5). In the New Testament, there is the example of the early church leader Timothy who was raised in a godly home. Paul was reminded of the “sincere faith” that was in him (2 Tim 1:5), and added, “which first lived in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice.” Scripture

provides a legacy of faithful parents seeking to instill the love and reverence of the Lord to the next generation, remembering the promise that, “those who honor me, I will honor” (1 Sam 2:30).⁷

Spiritual Attacks on the Family

In the Garden of Eden, the first attacks of the devil came against God’s Word. These attacks directly affected God’s institution of marriage and the fruit of marriage – the family. The serpent convinced the first wife that God was not good and undermined God’s Word. Sadly, the husband did not protect his wife in her vulnerability and the poison pill of sin entered the world. A bitter fruit of this appeared in the first generation of children. Cain rejected the Lord’s counsel about the danger of sin when he pursued murderous thoughts toward his brother Abel. Eventually, the first older brother in history murdered the first younger brother. From that beginning, Satan has been in the family-destroying business. This attack on the family is central to Satan’s war against mankind. It is a global, trans-generational war against “the seed of the woman” (Gen 3:15). In his attempt to wipe out the knowledge of God from one generation to the next, Satan attacks God’s transformational institutions: the church and the family.⁸

The intensity of these spiritual attacks begs the question: Why does the devil hate marriage and the family so much? Is it because he simply desires to cause as much hate, alienation, discord, and disappointment as he can between spouses? Is it because he hates the offspring that come from marriage? While these may be some of the reasons, perhaps the greatest reason is that the devil hates marriage because he hates the gospel of God’s grace in

7. J.W. Alexander, “The Nature, Warrant, and History of Family Worship,” in *A Theology of the Family*, edit. Jeff Pollard and Scott T. Brown (Wake Forest, NC: The National Center for Family-Integrated Churches, 2014), 53-54.

8. Pollard and Brown, *Theology of the Family*, 38.

Jesus Christ. God created marriage in order to give the world an earthly illustration of His love for His Church, His sacrifices on behalf of His Church, His union with His Church, His sanctification of the Church, and the glorious purpose that He has in mind for His Church.⁹ Satan wants to destroy Christian families because they are a conduit for the blessings of God for many generations. God's children are born into families, and Christ Himself, the Savior of the world, entered this world from His mother's womb. The serpent's attacks on the Christian family always have broader implications that reach far beyond a single generation. Satan knows that sin is the only thing that can defeat the exponential impact of Godly families multiplying across generations. For this reason, the devil continues to wage a relentless war against the family to this very hour.

Areas of Spiritual Attack on the Family in the Biblical Era

A family that lives in harmony and exhibits genuine love is a delight to all associated with it. Surely, this is what God had in mind when He established the family. Unfortunately, the Bible shows us relatively few families that attain this ideal. Throughout Bible history, families were being eroded by social, economic, and religious pressures. The following are some of the challenges which Biblical families encountered.

Childlessness

Childlessness was a major threat to a marriage in Biblical times. If a couple was unable to conceive a child, they looked upon the problem as a chastisement from God. Even though a man might continue to love his wife, a childless man sometimes married a second woman or used the services of a slave to conceive children (Gen 16:2-4; 30:3-5; Deut 21:10-14). Some

9. Pollard and Brown, *Theology of the Family*, 212.

men divorced their wives in order to do this. While this practice solved the problem of childlessness, it created many other problems.

Polygamy

Domestic strife was common when two women shared a husband in Old Testament times. The Hebrew word for the second wife literally meant “rival wife” (1 Sam 1:6). This suggests that bitterness and hostility existed between polygamous wives. Nevertheless, polygamy was not uncommon, especially among the Hebrew patriarchs and Israelite kings. If a man was unable to raise the required money for marriage to a second wife, he considered buying a slave for that purpose or using one he already had in his household (Gen 16:1-4; 30:1-8).

In a polygamous marriage, the husband invariably favored one wife over another. This caused complications such as the need to decide whose child to honor as firstborn son. Sometimes a man wanted to give his inheritance to the son of his favored wife although it was actually owed to the son of the “disliked” wife (Deut 21:15-17). Moses declared that the firstborn son had to be rightfully honored, and the husband could not shortchange the firstborn’s mother to “diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital right” (Exod 21:10).

Politics was also a motive for polygamy. Often a king sealed a covenant with another king by marrying his ally’s daughter such as Solomon’s first wife, the Pharaoh of Egypt’s daughter. When Scripture speaks of Solomon’s large harem, it points out that “he had seven hundred wives, princesses” (1 Kgs 11:3). This is likely an indication that most of his marriages were of a political nature and that the women came from small city-states and tribes surrounding Israel.

After the Exodus, most Israelite marriages were monogamous (Mark 10:2-9). The book of Proverbs never mentions polygamy, even though it touches on many aspects of Israelite

culture. The prophets frequently used the concept of monogamous marriage to describe the Lord's relationship to Israel.

Death of Husband

The death of a husband always has far-reaching consequences for his family. For people of Biblical times this was true as well. After a period of mourning, the widowed wife might follow one of several courses of action. If she was childless, she was, according to the Levirate law, expected to continue living with her husband's family (Deut 25:5-10). She was to marry one of her husband's brothers or a near kinsman. If these men were not available, she was free to marry outside the clan (Ruth 1:9). Widows with children had other options open to them. If the widow were elderly, one of her sons might care for her. If she had become financially secure, she might live alone. Occasionally a destitute widow had no male relative to depend on. Such women faced great hardships (1 Kgs 18:8-15; 2 Kgs 4:1-7). The childless widow of New Testament times found herself in a much more secure position. If she had no customary means of support, she could turn to the church for help. Paul suggested that young widows should re-marry and that elderly widows should be cared for by their children; but if the widow could turn to no one, the church should care for her (1 Tim 5:16).

Rebellious Children

It was a grave sin to dishonor one's father or mother. Moses ordered that a person who struck or cursed his parent should be put to death (Exod 21:15, 17; Lev 20:9). There is no record of this punishment being carried out but the Bible describes many instances in which children did dishonor their parents. For example, Absalom and Adonijah dishonored their father King David by attempting to usurp the throne without royal approval. When Ezekiel enumerated the sins of Jerusalem, he said, "Father and mother are treated with contempt in you; the sojourner

suffers extortion in your midst; the fatherless and the widow are wronged in you” (Ezek 22:7). Jesus also condemned religious leaders of His day for not honoring their parents (Matt 15:4-9).

Sibling Rivalry

Proverbs 18:19 vividly depicts the problem of children who argue with one another: “A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.” The Bible describes brothers who quarreled for various reasons. Jacob sought to steal Esau’s blessing for himself (Gen 27). Absalom hated Amnon because he raped Absalom’s sister (2 Sam 13). Solomon had his brother Adonijah executed because he suspected that Adonijah wanted his throne (1 Kgs 2:19-25). When Jehoram ascended the throne, he killed all his brothers so that they would never be a threat to him (2 Chr 21:4).¹⁰

Distortions of God’s Intention for the Family by Biblical Figures

Although God ordained marriage as a holy relationship between one man and one woman, this ideal was distorted by Biblical figures in several ways. It was distorted when some men took two wives (Gen 4:9). Intermarriage with foreign people and the adoption of pagan ways compounded the problem. These violations of God’s intention for marriage characterized the lives of even the earliest and most impactful Biblical figures.

Abraham

Scripture records that Abraham followed the heathen custom of having a child with his slave girl in order to produce an heir because his wife was barren. “Go, sleep with my slave, perhaps I can build a family through her” (Gen 16:2). The slave girl, Hagar, soon bore a son for Abraham. Later, Sarah also gave birth to a son. Hagar’s arrogance upset Sarah and caused her to treat Hagar harshly. When Sarah observed Ishmael making fun of her own son, she decided

10. Packer, Tenney, and White, *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Facts*, 417-419.

she had endured enough. She demanded that Abraham send Hagar away. Since Hagar had borne him a son, Abraham could not sell her as a slave. In order to diffuse the domestic conflict, he gave Hagar her freedom and sent her away with a gift (Gen 21:14; 25:6).

Jacob

Jacob was another Hebrew patriarch who followed pagan marriage customs. Jacob took two wives because his uncle tricked him into marrying two women (Gen 29:21-30). When Rachel realized that she was barren, she gave Jacob her maid “that I may also have children” (Gen 30:3-6). Leah became jealous and gave Jacob her own servant to bear more children in her name (Gen 30:9-13). Thus Jacob had two wives and two concubines, but he gave equal status to all his children as heirs of the covenant (Gen 46:8-27; 49).

David

Beginning with David, the kings of Israel indulged themselves with the luxury of many wives and concubines, even though God had specifically commanded them not to do this (Deut 17:17). This practice gave them social status and enabled them to make various political alliances (2 Sam 3:2-5; 5:13-16; 12:7-10; I Kgs 3:1; 11:1-4). David even fell into adultery with Bathsheba and committed murder in order to marry her. Death was the customary punishment for this sin (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22). However, instead of taking David’s life, God decreed that the child of David and Bathsheba should die and that strife should rise up against David in his own household (2 Sam 12:1-23).

Teachings on Divorce in the Bible

Mosaic Law

Due to the “hardness of heart,” (Matt 19:8) divorce was allowed in the Mosaic Law. Legally, the wife was bound to her husband as long as they both lived or until he divorced her. If

the woman was given a certificate of divorce, she was eligible to remarry any man except a priest (Lev 21:7, 14; Ezek 44:22). Although these laws allowed for divorce, God states that did not approve of it. “The man who hates and divorces his wife,” says the Lord, the God of Israel, “does violence to the one he should protect,” says the Lord Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful. (Mal 2:16). For this reason, the law was designed to, in fact, deter divorce rather than encourage it. It required a “writing of divorcement” – a public document granting the woman the right to remarry without civil or religious sanction. Divorcing a wife could not be done privately or arbitrarily.

The law stated that divorce was permissible when the wife “becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her” (Deut 24:1). Although the law did allow a man to divorce his wife, if the man had falsely accused his wife, he would be chastised and required to pay her father twice the usual bride price. If a man did have an accusation against his wife and wished to divorce her, there were procedures to follow that provided a measure of justice for the accused wife. Adultery was a serious crime which carried the death penalty by stoning. When the husband suspected his wife of adultery, he took her to the priest, who gave her the “jealousy test.” This was a “trial by ordeal” typical of ancient Near Eastern cultures. The woman was made to drink bitter water. If she were innocent, then the water did not affect her. If she were guilty, she would become ill. In that case, she was stoned to death as an adulteress (Num 5:11-31). If a man suspected his wife was not a virgin when he married her, he could take her to the elders of the city. If they judged her guilty, her punishment was death as well (Deut 22:13-21). Although not perfect justice by any stretch of the imagination, divorce in Old Testament times was intended to provide a measure of protection for the divorced wives.

Jesus' Teachings

In Jesus' day, there was much confusion about the grounds for divorce. The rabbis could not agree on what constituted the "uncleanness" of Deuteronomy 24:1. There were two opinions. Those following Rabbi Shammai held that adultery was the only grounds for divorce. Those who followed Rabbi Hillel accepted a number of reasons for divorce, including such things as poor cooking. The gospels record four statements by Jesus concerning divorce. In two of these, He allowed divorce in the case of adultery. In Matthew 5:32, Jesus commented on the position of both the woman and her husband: "but I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery." In another statement, Jesus spoke on the moral stipulations of the man who divorced his wife: "but I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery (Matt 19:9). These two statements seem to allow divorce on the basis of unfaithfulness. However, in two other contexts, Jesus appears to give no sanction at all to divorce. In Mark 10:11-12, He said, "anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery." In Luke 16:18, Jesus makes a similar statement, "anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery." The challenge from a theological perspective is how to correctly harmonize these various statements.

The first clue is found in Jesus' conversations with the Pharisees (Mark 10:5-9; Luke 16:18). Here, He is making the point that divorce is contrary to God's plan for marriage. Even though the Law of Moses allowed divorce, it was only a provisional and reluctant allowance. Jesus put "teeth" into the Law by declaring that, even if the divorced couple had not been

sexually unfaithful to each other, they would commit adultery in God's sight if they now married other partners. It should be noted that Jesus' statements belong in conversations with the Pharisees about the Mosaic Law, which they believed sanctioned divorce on grounds other than adultery (Deut 24: 1-4). Jesus' main point was that divorce should never be considered good nor should it be taken lightly. So, in His statement quoted in Luke 16:18, He did not even broach the subject of adultery. In the two passages from Matthew, (one of them a fuller account of what is recorded in Mark 10), Jesus allows divorce for one reason only – "immorality," or illicit sexual intercourse. In that case, the decree of divorce simply reflects the fact that the marriage has already been broken. A man divorcing his wife for this cause does not "make her an adulteress" because she already is one. Divorce for unchastity usually frees the innocent partner to remarry without incurring the guilt of adultery (Matt 19:9).

It should be noted that although Jesus allowed divorce for adultery, He did not require it. Insisting that divorce disrupts God's plan for marriage, His example opened the door to repentance, forgiveness, and healing in marriage, as He did in the case of other sin-wracked relationships. God's example had demonstrated this way of reconciliation and forgiveness when He sent Hosea to marry a harlot, then told him to buy her back after she had sold herself to another man. God forgave Israel in the same manner. When the people of Israel continued to worship idols, God sent them into captivity but He redeemed them and brought them back again to Himself (Jer 3:1-14; Is. 54). Reconciliation has always been God's preferred path to resolving conflict within relationships. It is Jesus' way of solving marriage troubles.

Paul's Teachings

In 1 Corinthians 7:15, Paul teaches that a Christian whose mate has deserted the marriage should feel free to formalize the divorce; "...if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or

sister is not bound in such circumstances.” Yet, Paul encourages the believer to keep the marriage together, in hopes that the unbelieving partner might be saved and the children will not suffer. Apparently, Paul is thinking of people who were married before they were converted, because he also directs believers never to marry unbelievers (1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14-18).

The situation and audience which Paul was addressing was quite different from the one Jesus addressed in the episode narrated by Matthew 19 and Mark 10. Jesus was speaking to the teachers of the law – while Paul was speaking to Christians, many of them Gentiles who had never lived under the Law of Moses. Paul’s readers had changed their way of life since they had married and were trying to influence their spouse to do the same. They were bound to think not only of their own welfare but of their spouses’ and children’s as well. Paul sought to discourage divorce, despite its’ undoubted commonness in the Graeco-Roman culture of pagan Corinth. In so doing, he showed himself to be a true and loyal spokesman of the Law.¹¹

A Theology of Work

As the target audience of this thesis-project is a group of professionals linked by their shared occupation, it seems appropriate to examine a theology of work. A theological study of work reveals that work has dignity because it is something that God does and because individuals do it in God’s place, as his representatives. Work is a part of our design and all kinds of work have dignity. It is a way to serve God through creativity, particularly in the creation of culture. God has given each person talents and gifts so that they can do for one another what He wants to do for individuals and through individuals. For example, the author J.R.R. Tolkien had a very Christian understanding of his work. As a writer, for example, he felt that he could fill

11. Packer, Tenney, and White, *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Facts*, 439-440.

people's lives with meaning through the telling of stories that convey the nature of reality.¹² In a similar way, the final product of the thesis, the FRG, is intended to be a tool to allow God to work through it to affect culture. In this instance, the culture revolves around the shared vocation of military pilots.

A Theology of Vocation

Central to developing a theological understanding of work is the recovery of the idea that all human work is not merely a “job” but a calling. The Latin word “vocare” – to call – is at the root of the word “vocation.” Today, the word often means simply a job, but that was not the original sense. In order to see work as not just a “job” but a vocation requires an understanding that someone else, God, calls a person to do it and they do it for Him rather than for themselves. For a Christian, work can be a calling if it is reimagined as a mission of service to something beyond merely their own interests but a service to the Lord.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 7, Paul counsels readers that when they become Christians it is unnecessary to change what they are currently doing in life – their marital state, job, or social station – in order to live their lives before God in a way that pleases him. In verse 17, Paul directs, “Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches.” (1 Cor 7) Paul is not referring in this case to church ministries, but to common social and economic tasks – “secular jobs” – and naming them God's callings and assignments. The implication is clear: God equips all people with talents and gifts for various kinds of works, for the purpose of building up the human community.

12. Timothy Keller, *Every Good Endeavor* (New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2012), 13.

Studies of the integration of faith and work go back to the Protestant Reformation. The sixteenth-century protestant reformers, particularly Martin Luther and John Calvin, argued that all work, even so-called secular work, was as much a calling from God as the ministry of the monk or priest. The earliest writers of Lutheran theology put special stress on the dignity of all work, observing that God cared for, fed, clothed, sheltered, and supported the human race through human labor. When individuals work, they are, as those in the Lutheran tradition often put it, the “fingers of God,” the agents of his providential love for others. This understanding elevates the purpose of work for a believer from making a living to loving their neighbor. At the same time, this understanding releases the believer from the crushing burden of working primarily to prove themselves, seeking self-fulfillment or their own self-realization.

Those in the Calvinist, or “Reformed” tradition spoke of another aspect to the idea of work as God’s calling. In this view, work not only cares for creation, but also directs and structures it. In this Reformed view, the purpose of work is to create a culture that honors God and enables people to thrive. Christianity provides very specific teachings about human nature and what makes human beings flourish. These reformers held that work was to be done in line with these understandings.¹³ Faithful work, then, is to operate out of a Christian “worldview.” This is one of the purposes of the FRG. It is intended to be a tool to help military pilots balance vocational and family demands from a Christian “worldview.”

God as a Worker

The Bible begins talking about work in the first verse of the first chapter of its’ first book. That is how important and basic work is to existence. Genesis describes God’s creation of the world as work. In fact, it depicts the magnificent project of cosmos invention within a regular

13. Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*, 4.

workweek of seven days. It then records human beings working in paradise. This fact reveals that work was not a necessary evil. Work did not come into existence after the fall. Most significantly, it shows that work is not beneath God Himself. Work could not have had a more exalted inauguration. It is also remarkable that in chapter 1 of the book of Genesis, God not only works but finds delight in it. “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good...the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array” (Gen 1:31, 2:1). The second chapter of Genesis shows that God works not only to create but also to care for His creation. This is what theologians call the work of “providence.” God created human beings and works for their benefit as their provider. In Genesis, God formed a man (Gen 2:7), planted a garden for him and waters it (Gen 2:6, 8), and fashions a wife for him (Gen 2:21-22). The Bible promises that God continues to work as a provider to this very day.

Mankind as Workers

In Genesis chapter 2, verse 15 God puts human beings into the garden to “work it and keep it.” The implication is that while God works for us as our provider, we also work for him. Psalm 127, verse 1 reads that, “Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.” This indicates that God is building the house through the builders. As Martin Luther argued, Psalm 145 says that God feeds every living thing, meaning that He is feeding every person through the labor of farmers and others. One biblical scholar summed it up: “It is perfectly clear that God’s good plan always includes human beings working, or, more specifically, living in the constant cycle of work and rest.”¹⁴

14. Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*, 22.

The fact that God put work in paradise is surprising to many people because so often work is thought of as a necessary evil or even a punishment. Yet, work was not brought into the human story after the fall of Adam, as part of the resulting brokenness and curse. Rather, it was a part of the blessedness of the garden of God. As work was created before the fall, it is as much a basic human need as food, beauty, rest, friendship, prayer, and sexuality. Without meaningful work there is a sense of significant inner loss and emptiness. People who are cut off from work because of physical or other reasons quickly discover how much they need work to thrive emotionally, physically, and spiritually. This realization injects a deeper and far more positive meaning into the common view that people work merely in order to survive. According to the Bible, we don't merely need the money from work to survive; we need the work itself to survive and live fully human lives.

A Call to Vocation as Ministry

To have a proper theological view of work is to approach it with an understanding that work is a "vocation" or calling from God. From this perspective, work is to be pursued as a contribution to the good of all and not merely as a means to an individual's own advancement or self-fulfillment. Daily work can be viewed as a calling if it is reconceived as God's assignment to serve others. Christians should be aware of this revolutionary understanding of the purpose of their work in the world. The call for Christians in their vocation is not to choose jobs and conduct our work to fulfill ourselves but to serve others and to be His salt and light in the midst of the world.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

As cultures progress from one moral season to another, changes take place that require a biblical response. Movements often rise up attempting to respond to recover good things that are being lost. These reactionary movements are often vehement, but they are usually characterized by public responses through publishing. As the culture collapses, the writers pick up their weapons to sound the alarm. They are reactionary. They are often disruptive. One of the ways you can identify cultural degradation in a particular area is that you begin to see a wave of publishing on the subject that you had not seen for many years previously. When there is a major shift taking place, people write about it and talk about it. As we find ourselves in a period of history where the family is being attacked on all sides, we have seen a rise in publishing on the family. For many years there was very little activity, but over the past two decades the activity has increased dramatically.

–Jeff Pollard, *A Theology of the Family*

There is an abundance of literature available on the topic of marriage and family counseling. Some of this literature is vibrant and insightful while some is dry and academic. However, there is no available marriage and family literature targeted specifically towards military pilots and their families. The goal of this literature review was to gather resources which could be synthesized and contextualized to form a “Family Resiliency Guide.” This guide is designed to be a condensed literary tool which combines the best of the available literature on the topic of marriage and family counseling presented to military pilots and their families in a manner which is both insightful and engaging.

As a child, my parents divorced when I was one month old. Due, in part, to a lack of knowledge of help available, my parents repeated this cycle of failed marriages until by the time that I had graduated college, they had endured five divorces in total. It is one of the chief goals of my life to be a generational change agent and to break the family cycle of extreme levels of family dysfunction. Reading widely and studying on this topic over the past twenty years, along

with having Godly mentors and examples, has been the key to achieving a healthy – if not perfect – home life for my family today.

As a result of my background, marriage and family counseling is a personal passion of mine. It is one of the aspects of serving as a military chaplain which I find most fulfilling. I have also been fortunate to have been given the opportunity to organize and lead marriage and family conferences for military members and their families in both the Air National Guard and while on active duty. These opportunities opened doors to formal training in order to present conference material and financial resources to purchase books for free distribution to military members. In fact, some of the books which will be analyzed in this literature review are books which I have been privileged to be able to supply to military members. Although volumes could be written in review of the available literature related to marriage and family counseling, I will limit this literature review to books which have been synthesized and contextualized in order to create the FRG.

To begin a review of applicable literature, it seems wise to start with the content of the materials currently being taught to the general military population. As a result of the Global War on Terror and, specifically, the 15-month deployment lengths that became standard for Army personnel, the National Guard began the Strong Bonds program. These programs provided funding for the development of family resiliency programs currently in use by both the Army and Air National Guard. As mentioned above, my position as a chaplain in the US Air Force has allowed for the opportunity to receive training and material which allows me to serve as an instructor for a number of these programs. The curriculum for these various programs are tailored to audiences at differing stages of maturity and prior knowledge of relationship skills. The content of these courses are further tailored to singles, couples and families. The curriculum

content spans a spectrum of depth of knowledge from remedial to more advanced. Overall, they provide a broad base of material and inspiration for contextualization of the principles of family resiliency.

Strong Bonds Military Conference Literature

Better Than Best Friends Forever! by Kelly Simpson

The most advanced curriculum available through the Strong Bonds program is published by an organization known as Active Military Life and Resiliency Skills. Their curriculum is titled *Better than Best Friends Forever!* and has a leader's guide which presents a very large amount of information which was useful in the formation of the FRG. It is the breadth of material which is the strength of the curriculum. Clearly organized, the curriculum makes abundant use of acronyms in order to help the participants to retain the presented information. For example, when presenting a section on anger management, the acronym P.O.W.E.R. is utilized. This acronym teaches the participants to pause, observe, wire, explain and regulate. This technique allows for easy recall of the presented concept. In the leader's guide, the author credits the premier psychologist in the area of emotional regulation, Dr. Steven Stosny, for the content of the material. This was an affirmation that the goal of presenting family resiliency material to military members is a task of presentation over production. By this, the goal is not to research but to gather, synthesize and contextualize.

The purpose of this curriculum is 'stress inoculation' prior to deployment. Although the content of the material has tremendous value in either pre- or post- deployment situations, the most effective use of the material would seem to be prior to a time of family separation. This is because a large portion of the material focuses on understanding human emotions. Among the topics covered are happiness, depression, anger, abuse and compassion. Other particularly useful

topics covered are destructive habits and predictors of relationship satisfaction. There is also an insightful section on when it is appropriate to share experiences encountered during a deployment.

In terms of areas of weakness, the wide breadth of material covered limits the amount of depth which can be covered in any one particular area. For example, there is an excellent section on emotions and the body. This section provides a primer on the physiological effects of emotions on the body. The fault lies in the fact that this topic is so interesting that it leaves the reader wanting more information on this particular topic. Most of the material presented in this curriculum is properly viewed in this light – as primers to the wider field of study on the presented topics. Overall, this leads to this curriculum being the most academically oriented of the available Strong Bonds materials.

Survival Skills for Healthy Families Instructor Manual by Flo Creighton and George Doub

As a counter to the academic nature of the previous material, *the Survival Skills for Healthy Families Instructor Manual* is very engaging and practical. This curriculum is designed for an entire family and is very activity oriented. It is also presented in a way that is very sensitive to varying family compositions, particularly to blended families. The material is presented in a balanced manner which combines academic content with numerous activities which allow all family members to engage and process the material. Simultaneously, this curriculum presents material in the order of stages of a family life cycle. Material is divided into six independent sections: Parents as Leaders; Children in Healthy Families; Adult Relationships in Healthy Families, As Children Grow: Change in Healthy Families, Solving Family Problems, and Sex, Drugs and You: Passing on Your Values to Your Children. Each of these sections

presents academic content in a form titled, “mini lectures” and then focuses on the understanding and application of the covered material to a family setting. The content of this leader’s manual makes it an excellent initial exposure to family members in the beginning stages of learning how to develop strong relationship skills.

How to Avoid Falling for a Jerk (or Jerkette) Instructor Manual by John Van Epp

The most youth-oriented of the Strong Bonds material, this curriculum is popular among the more junior members of the National Guard. This manual and curriculum focuses on teaching basic skills on understanding human personality and discerning compatibility in selecting a dating and eventual marriage partner. Some of the skills which are examined are “Why is it important to see yourself from another’s perspective?” The premise being that this skill is necessary to begin to understand needs for empathy, conflict resolution, and understanding your partner’s viewpoints.¹ Other topics addressed are “What are the warning signals of somebody who doesn’t have this ability?,” “What are some emotions you want to have a healthy control over?,” “Why are there differences, sometimes, between relationship skills used in dating and those used in marriage?”

As an example of how the curriculum addresses specific relationship topics, a final question asks, “How would you recognize an emotionally immature person?” This question is unpacked throughout the manual at different places. In this way, the same advice is reinforced and taken to a practical application level throughout the curriculum. On this issue of emotional maturity, the curriculum teaches that, “emotional instability is often masked in the beginning of a

1. John Van Epp. *How to Avoid Falling for a Jerk (or Jerkette) Instructor Manual* (Anna Maria, FL: Love Thinks, LLC, 2011), 13.

relationship. It can even be attractive when it is not understood as something unhealthy.

However, over time it becomes apparent that it causes conflicts, misunderstandings, and other relationship difficulties. It is often seen in the patterns of previous relationships as those become known.”² Following on this same topic later in the manual, it asks “How can a strong emotional bond be beneficial for marriage but detrimental for dating? During the dating relationship it is important to have enough ‘objectivity’ or ‘distance’ from your partner so that you can think about what he or she is really like, and what this person would be like in a marriage and family. Over-attachment leads to overlooking problem areas in the partner. This is beneficial in marriage because it helps to heal the hurts and misunderstandings that occur during the course of marriage. However, it leads to minimizing problem areas in a dating relationship that should be examined and addressed.”³ Finally, the manual presents a section labeled “DIG DEEPER.” In these sections the practical applications of the principles are taught. Advice such as, “it often takes at least three months to begin to see problem patterns in someone. Have you ever heard the phrase, ‘seeing each other through rose-colored glasses?’ At the start of an attraction or romance, or for that matter even a friendship, you do tend to see mainly the positives about someone. It takes at least three months to begin to see the real character traits of a person. So, knowing this, is it very wise to be talking about an “us” or to make a commitment to someone after a few weeks? If you do, you might find yourself going steady with someone who is not who you think they really are.”⁴ This is the type of wise counsel which can prevent a young military member from making unwise choices from the outset of a relationship.

2. Van Epp, *How to Avoid Falling for a Jerk*, 13.

3. Van Epp, *How to Avoid Falling for a Jerk*, 22.

4. Van Epp, *How to Avoid Falling for a Jerk*, 23.

After introducing these thought provoking questions, most of the content of the curriculum involves further development of these themes. The content is presented in a way that ‘circles back’ and reinforces prior material, expanding and reinforcing the principles covered. Overall, this allows for a very effective teaching method which can be instrumental in preparing young military members to make wise choices in relationships. The drawback is that the curriculum is very youth centric. When advertised as a “singles” event, older military members have responded in surveys that they were disappointed. These responses and their follow up comments indicate that the content of this manual is very effective. However, the value of it seems to diminish as a service member in the audience becomes older and more seasoned in life.

PREP Leader Manual Version 7.0

by Scott M. Stanley, Howard Markman, Natalie Jenkins and Susan L. Blumberg

The *PREP (Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program) Leader’s Manual* was an excellent source of academic and statistical material for this thesis-project. Based on over twenty years of research, the authors of PREP teach marital/premarital couples essential skills such as how to communicate effectively, work as a team, solve problems, manage conflict, preserve and enhance love, commitment and friendship. The company which developed PREP has extensive experience in training mental health professionals and clergy in civilian and military settings. Leaders are trained to conduct PREP workshops and use the concepts in their Leader’s Manual to assist couples in preventing or treating relationship distress.

As the manual begins, it clearly states the challenge that most people desire a satisfying marriage that lasts a lifetime. Yet, couples marrying today still have about a fifty percent chance of getting divorced. What starts out as a relationship of great joy and promise can become the most frustrating and painful endeavor of a person’s lifetime. The damaging effects of destructive

marital conflict and divorce on spouses and children include economic problems, medical problems, and mental health problems. On average, people who are married live longer, have better health, and do better financially. The best of all worlds (on this world) is be securely committed in a healthy and happy marriage.⁵

Referencing numerous studies on the topic of marital breakdown, the manual thoroughly analyzes risks to relationships. The manual draws a distinction between what are referred to as “static” and “dynamic” factors. The relatively static factors that are hard to change once married are: having a personality tendency to react strongly or defensively to problems and disappointments, having divorced parents, living together prior to marriage, being previously divorced, having children from a previous marriage, having different religious backgrounds, marrying at a very young age (for example, at the age of 18 or 19), knowing each other only for a short time before marriage, experiencing financial hardship or having major mental health problems. Counter to these are dynamic factors that couples can change to improve their odds of success. These are: negative styles of talking and fighting with each other (such as arguments that rapidly become negative, put downs, and the silent treatment), difficulty communicating well when they disagree, trouble handling disagreements as a team, unrealistic beliefs about marriage, lower levels of supportiveness between spouses, having different attitudes about important matters, a low level of commitment to one another reflected in such things as not protecting the relationship from others that a person is attracted to or failing to view the marriage as a long term investment. The benefit of having these risks broken down this way is that it

5. Scott M. Stanley, Howard J. Markman, Natalie H. Jenkins, and Susan L. Blumberg. *PREP Leader Manual Version 7.0* (Greenwood Village, CO: PREP Educational Products, Inc., 2008), 11.

shows what areas can be improved through skills training and intervention.⁶ These are the areas which can be addressed in the FRG.

An important study cited in the *PREP Leader's Manual* directly applies to the target population of military pilots. A study is referenced which indicates that it is not only the presence of a high number of the negatives that are listed above that is related to marital failure but the absence of a strong positive bond as well. For pilots, whose profession requires a large amount of time away from loved ones and, therefore, less time to invest in positive interactions and experiences, the effects of these negatives can be compounded. In fact, research shows that negative interaction is magnified in marriages when there is also an absence of an ability to interact supportively at other times. This is because the ability to be supportive (and positively connected) mitigates the impact of negative interaction on marriages.⁷ When the ratio of positive to negative interactions drops below five to one, the marriage suffers a drastic turnaround. Partners begin to view the relationship as basically negative.⁸ This research tends to reinforce the value of investing resources into higher risk target populations such as military pilots before they begin the predictable stages of marital breakdown.

These stages of marital breakdown are important to understand when designing a thesis-project which, essentially, seeks to break what in aviation is referred to as an error chain. When analyzing aircraft accidents, almost always it is not just one error which leads to the disaster but a series of “links in a chain.” It is commonly taught to pilots that if one link in the chain of errors can be identified and mitigated that disasters can be averted. The “error chain” leading to

6. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 20.

7. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 19.

8. Everett L. Worthington, Jr, *Hope Focused Marriage Counseling* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 47.

marital breakdown presented in the *PREP Leader's Manual* points out potential areas of intervention through the cultivation of relationship skill sets. The manual points out that two people initially become attracted to one another out of the mix of similarities, differences, and proximity. As time is spent together that is satisfying, a sense of attachment grows between the two spouses. Along with this bond comes a sense of anxiety over the potential loss of the loved one. In this context, commitment develops, in large measure to remove this anxiety by the promise of a future together. Prior to the wedding day, most first time married couples have had few tests of their ability to handle conflict. They simply have not encountered many significant issues or disagreements during courtship. That is partly why satisfaction tends to be very high at this stage. Over time, this committed couple must increasingly deal with the problems of life, together.⁹ The challenges common to life present points of conflicting views which can lead to arguments. What they argue about and how they argue is a function of both expectations and their abilities to communicate and negotiate effectively. Out of this mix, a very important change occurs over time in the relationship: the presence of the spouse becomes increasingly associated with pain and frustration, not pleasure or support.¹⁰ These repeated negative interactions lead each to consistently interpret the actions of the other as more negative than is warranted. Confidence erodes and the sense of attachment that led to commitment in the first place becomes more fragile.¹¹ Ultimately, the marriage becomes a shell of its former state with the view each spouse holds of the other radically changing. In this case, the initial view becomes harder and harder to reinstate. Decisions to stay or leave now have more to do with the costs of

9. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 22.

10. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 22.

11. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 22.

leaving than the desire to stay. As constraints keeping marriages together weaken in society, couples who get to this point are increasingly likely to divorce. In the past many couples in this situation stayed together in stable but miserable marriages. Understanding these stages of marital breakdown allows for an understanding of how to break the “error chain.”¹² Breaking this “error chain” is the goal of the FRG.

The research presented in the *PREP Leader’s Manual* also affirmed the value in developing the FRG as a tool for those in the beginning stages of marriage.

The manual points out that standard approaches to addressing marital distress provide interventions after problems develop when negative effects on spouses and children may already be in evidence. PREP provides an alternative approach where the goal is to teach competencies associated with successful adjustment before problems develop.¹³ In the same way, the FRG is intended to be a preventative tool not a reactive tool. Research cited in the *PREP Leader’s Manual* suggests that the family life cycle can be thought of as a developmental track, with appropriate tasks and stressors to be dealt with at each stage or time of transition. The transition to marriage stage has its own set of specific developmental tasks, including development of constructive communication and conflict resolution skills, development of realistic and compatible attitudes and expectations about marriage and relationships, and development of behavioral and communication patterns that satisfy the basic emotional and psychological needs of each spouse.¹⁴ Knowing that these are the required skills for success, the FRG is designed to address each of these potential relationship stressors. The academic research presented in the

12. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 22.

13. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 13.

14. Stanley et al. *PREP Leader Manual*, 13.

PREP Leader's Manual provided an excellent foundation in discerning the content for the final product of this thesis-project.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families by Stephen R. Covey

Reading the *7 Habits of Highly Effective Families* was the catalyst for this thesis-project. When first considering a Doctor of Ministry degree and reflecting on possible thesis-project topics, my original ideas centered around the spiritual disciplines. Specifically, I envisioned creating a training manual for spiritual journaling which has been a practice of mine for over 20 years. However, once I read the introduction to this book, a spark was lit which has led to the creation of the FRG for military pilots. The following is an excerpt from the introduction which inspired me:

Good families - even great families - are off track 90 percent of the time! The key is that they have a sense of destination. They know what the "track" looks like. And they keep coming back to it time and time again. It's like the flight of an airplane. Before the plane takes off, the pilots have a flight plan. They know exactly where they're going and start off in accordance with their plan. But during the course of the flight, wind, rain, turbulence, air traffic, human error, and other factors act upon that plane. They move it slightly in different directions so that most of the time that plane is not even on the prescribed flight path! Throughout the entire trip there are slight deviations from the flight path. Weather systems or unusually heavy air traffic may even cause major deviations. But barring anything too major, the plane will arrive at its destination. Now how does that happen? During the flight, the pilots receive constant feedback. They receive information from instruments that read the environment, from control towers, from other airplanes - even sometimes from the stars. And based on that feedback, they make adjustments so that time and time again, they keep returning to the flight plan. The hope lies not in the deviations but in the vision, the plan, and the ability to get back on track. The flight of that airplane is, I believe, the ideal metaphor for family life. With regard to our families, it doesn't make any difference if we are off target or even if our family is a mess. The hope lies in the vision and in the plan and in the courage to keep coming back time and time again.¹⁵

15. Stephen R. Covey. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families*. (New York, NY: Golden Books, 1997), 10.

Reading this analogy of applying the skills of family resilience to aviation allowed me to see a unique way in which I could combine my passions for aviation and family counseling in a way which applied my calling as an Air Force chaplain.

The format for the book is based on the best-selling book *The 7 Habit of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey. The author transferred many of the same concepts to this book and applied them to family life. I had an opportunity to meet the author and his wife while attending a Strong Bonds training event. At this training event, I was taught to present the material in the book to military families. The following are the habits listed in the book with a brief description of each. The first is to “Be Proactive.” This habit focuses on the fact that every person can become an agent of change. The second is to “Begin with the End in Mind.” This habit describes building a family mission statement which places principles such as forgiveness, compassion, and charity as chief values. The third habit is to “Put First Things First.” In this habit, Covey tackles the thorny issues of work-life balance, day care, working mothers as well as others with tact and truth. The fourth habit is to “Think Win-Win.” This habit emphasizes the mutual benefit when all members are satisfied by the decisions made by the family. The fifth habit is to “Seek First to Understand... Then to be Understood.” This habit calls for a person to learn to step out of their own world view and embrace – with understanding and empathy – the heart and head of the other person. The sixth habit is to “Synergize.” Through learning to practice this discipline, compromise becomes a daily way of life. The seventh and final habit described in the book is to “Sharpen the Saw.” In this section, Covey emphasizes the need for every family to renew itself in four key areas of life: physical, social, mental and spiritual. Each of these habits challenge a reader to apply leadership principles to family life.

Although each of these habits could have been included in the FRG, I chose only two, “Begin with the End in Mind” and “Sharpen the Saw.” There were a number of compelling reasons listed in the book for including a section on “Begin with the End in Mind” which is practically expressed in the creation of a family mission statement. The first reason was Biblical. As scripture says, “without a vision the people perish.” (Proverbs 29:18) As Covey states, having your destination clearly in mind affects every decision along the way. This seems to be very true for families. As was further stated, “if you carefully consider the problems people face in marriage, you will find that in almost every case they arise out of conflicting role expectations and problem solving strategies.”¹⁶ A family mission statement is a combined, unified expression from all family members of what their family is all about and the principles that they choose to govern their family life. The other reason for this inclusion was sociological. As Covey emphatically states, family is the most important, fundamental organization in the world. It is wise for an organization so important to have a vision.

The second habit included in the FRG was “Sharpen the Saw.” The purpose of this section is to teach families the value of taking the time to renew itself in the four key areas of life: physical, social, mental and spiritual.¹⁷ Once again using an aviation analogy, Covey writes,

This is the exact same as in aviation. This habit fulfills the need for constant refueling and maintenance of the plane and for continual upgrading of the training and skill level of the pilots and crew. Even the most veteran professional pilots constantly practice the elemental and beginning steps and keep constantly updated on new technology in order to be current and prepared.¹⁸

16. Covey, *7 Habits*, 82.

17. Covey, *7 Habits*, 276.

18. Covey, *7 Habits*, 278.

“Sharpening the Saw” includes family traditions such as celebrations of meaningful events in the life of a family and making fun memories together. These times help a person to understand who they are. It creates a deep knowledge that they are part of a family that’s a strong unit, that loves one another, that respects and honors one another, that celebrates one another’s birthdays and special events. Through traditions it is possible to reinforce the connection of the family. They give a feeling of belonging, of being supported, of being understood. The traditions allow a family member to know and feel that they are committed to one another. They are a part of something that’s greater than themselves.¹⁹

Literature Related to the Pilot Lifestyle

First Class Marriage by Sven Zimmer

When I first conceived of this thesis-project, there was no literature available which dealt specifically with topic of the challenges faced by pilots and their families. However, approximately one year after beginning to think about this project, I was delighted to find a self-published book on an aviation website. The book is not overtly Christian but it can be inferred by some of the quotations used in the book that the author is a Christian. The book is written in a way which engages with readers who have not previously read books on the topic of marriage and relationships. To accomplish this, the author makes heavy use of narrative, sharing stories which he has collected over years of flying. Some of the stories are dramatic, some are compelling and some are just sad. Still, the stories shared all move the reader towards understanding principles which help a person understand concepts essential to relationship resilience. The primary difference between this work and the FRG is the approach to conveying

19. Covey, *7 Habits*, 280.

information. *First Class Marriage* is written in a way which seems to be an attractional work to entice a person to explore the topic of family resilience. In contrast, the assumption of the FRG is that that reader has an existing interest in strengthening and protecting their relationships. Although there are engaging side facts and stories, the FRG is designed to be more academic and overt in the goal of teaching practical life skills. Although different in the presentation of material, *First Class Marriage* read as though it was written by a kindred spirit with a passion to serve those in the aviation career field.

The author quotes statistics and makes observations which I incorporated in this thesis-project chapter on the problem and its setting. The author's research on the actual divorce rate of professional pilots, "that most airlines now have nearly seven out of ten pilots who have been previously married, go home to either an empty house or the wife of their second (some even third or more) marriage."²⁰ seems to be in line with my own personal observations. The author further states that, "at the company I work for, the divorce rate is more than 75 percent, meaning the majority of pilots have been divorced at least once."²¹ With the same curiosity for the topic that I share, the author asks the question, "Why is the divorce rate so much higher for us in the traveling industry than it is for the regular crowd? Is it because we are gone from home for too long? How about the cheating factor? Do our relationships suffer from more divorces as a result of affairs and unfaithfulness? If so, is it the fact that we are away from home and that there is more opportunity to cheat? Or could it be our personalities that lead us into temptations? The reality is that we are all subject to temptations. No matter what line of work you are in, it's how

20. Sven Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*. (Maitland, FL: Zimmer Aerogistics, 2014), 2.

21. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 17.

you handle the temptations that makes a difference."²² Later stated more succinctly, the author asks, "Is it their personality, their work schedules, or perhaps just bad luck?"²³

To get to the source of this problem, Zimmer begins by reflecting on his experience of living and working within the world of professional pilots.

Most of these pilots are extremely intelligent, have remarkable backgrounds and are the nicest people. Many of these pilots have fought in wars defending their country, flown at speeds faster than sound in parts of the world I can't even pronounce. How is it that these amazing individuals can accomplish so much but yet fall victim to another divorce? Is it really that difficult? Why do some stay married their entire career, yet others in the same profession get divorced after 30 years? I may be going out on a limb here, but I consider most of us in the industry to be very intelligent individuals. Can it really be that more than 75 percent of us make horrible decisions when picking a spouse?²⁴

Zimmer then begins to analyze possible reasons for this high rate of marital breakdown. In the thesis-project chapter "The Problem and Its Setting," I presented my belief that the causes were a combination of lifestyle, career over-emphasis, authority issues and personality traits. The author of *First Class Marriage* seems to draw similar conclusions citing both personality issues and a lifestyle where a pilot spends significant time being in authority away from family. Discussing authority, he admonishes his readers by noting that, "we often times come home, and since we have been in charge for the past 10 days, feel like that can continue at home. But I've got news for you that just simply doesn't work. It's not fair to your spouse, not fair to the kids, and not fair to you."²⁵ On personality, the author writes as a pilot himself when he states, "Here is where one of the greatest challenges stems from in our lives. Our personality is driven on

22. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 88.

23. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 2.

24. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 17.

25. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 119.

planning, seeing things that need to be done and doing them."²⁶ He then encourages his readers to turn a character trait which can be a negative into a positive when he writes,

You are where you are today because of your personality. You are determined, focused, and motivated to accomplish what you set out to do; otherwise, you would have quit the pursuit of this career a long time ago. You were focused for a long time on this moment, finally finding your dream job. Instead of letting go of your motivation to reach this goal, try to redirect that same motivation to your personal life now.²⁷

The author has a depth of understanding of the challenges of a pilot lifestyle. Writing of the perspective of the spouses and families of pilots, he writes how:

they also knew that when daddy goes to work, mommy's rules were back in play, and they would adjust to them once he left. Both Mike and Jim's wives said that it was so frustrating to have their husbands come home because they would have their own schedule to get things done and the minute they walked in the door they would take over. Then to top things off, they could sense the disappointment in their husbands and that would make them frustrated. Instead of the husband focusing on what a great job they did the entire time they were gone, they would focus on the things that weren't done when they expected them to be done. The women both said that they would run things just fine when their husbands were gone away on trips. Sure the laundry would pile up on certain days, or the dishwasher wouldn't run every day, but things got done and after all, taking care of kids and a household is the hardest job anyone could have. The husbands both said that they felt like they would have to work while away, and then also have to work while at home. In Jim's case, his wife felt so bad about him not showing her his appreciation that she ended up finding it with someone else. Of course that's not an excuse for cheating on your partner, but it's what happened.²⁸

This is reflective of the author's style, to present a narrative and to conclude with a warning of the potential consequences of this course of action.

Still the author presents hope for military pilots who transition into civilian aviation careers. Writing on the topic of separation and reunion, it is noted that, "many military couples do very well in aviation, simply because they are used to longer periods of time apart from their

26. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 119.

27. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 6.

28. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 119.

spouses. For many in fact, a two-week trip is a cakewalk compared to 60 days away on deployment.²⁹ This statement would seem to be an affirmation of the usefulness of the FRG for military pilots. Prayerfully, it can allow these pilots and their families to become competent in those skills which lead to strong marriages and families while serving in the military. If they can master these skills during their formative years then their likelihood of relationship success can continue throughout their lives.

Unfriendly Skies by Captain “X” and Reynolds Dodson

Many years ago, when I was an undergraduate at Penn State University in the mid-1990’s, I sought out resources to help to discern my further career path. Of the hundreds of thousands of books in the university library this was the only book that had even a small section written about the lifestyle of an airline pilot. It is written in the first person and the primary purpose of the book is to discuss the changes in the airline industry after the government’s deregulation of the airline industry in the late 1970’s. The section of the book which was applicable to this thesis-project concerned the stress on pilots and their families due to the financial instability and eventual dissolving of many airlines brought about by the effects of this government decision. Describing the effects on families, the author describes what life is like for a spouse and family of a pilot given the unusual lifestyle which accompanies the frequent absences followed by times of reunion. Although it is written by an airline pilot, the lifestyle issues are similar to those faced by military pilots, particularly in the refueling and airlift aviation units. For this reason, it seems applicable for consideration and inclusion during the formation of the FRG.

29. Zimmer, *First Class Marriage*, 87.

In a section of the book concerning a spouse's perspective on being married to a pilot, a spouse describes the passion that she sees in her husband's life for being a pilot. More than in the average career, pilots tend to be enthusiastic for their profession. "My husband (she says) is a typical airline pilot. He's an overgrown kid. His planes are the toys he plays with. When you live with a pilot, that's something you get used to. It's the curse of these guys – but it's what keeps up their energy levels."³⁰ The lifestyle which can accompany families where a spouse is a pilot is then summed up by the spouse. "Life with a pilot is one of feast versus famine. They're either off somewhere flying, or else around causing trouble for you. It's like living with a retiree. You think, 'Why doesn't he get out of here?' Then suddenly, he's gone, and you say, 'When is he coming home again?'"³¹ These periods of absence and reunion over a long period of time have the effect of shaping the dynamics of the family. Each member of the family must adapt to this lifestyle, not just the pilot. "Unlike those women who depend on their husbands ('Could you talk to our lawyer' 'Could you spank our son this evening?'), the wife of a pilot has to learn self-sufficiency. When a problem comes up, she has to handle it like a single woman. The joke in our family is that my husband is, 'The Phantom.' Some of our friends think that our children are fatherless. Even my mother says she suspects I just rented him. She says I paid him five dollars to say 'I do' at the wedding ceremony."³²

All of these lifestyle adaptations can lead to underlying currents of dysfunction if they are not addressed in ways which lead to healthy patterns. For example, a pattern can develop where the pilot can seek to go away on assignments in order to "escape" from the stressors of family

30. Captain "X" and Reynolds Dodson. *Unfriendly Skies: Revelations of a Deregulated Airline Pilot*. (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1989), 168.

31. Captain "X" and Dodson, *Unfriendly Skies*, 168.

32. Captain "X" and Dodson, *Unfriendly Skies*, 168.

life. This can happen especially during seasons of peak stress when there are young children in the home. The book describes how this pattern appears to the spouse of the pilot. “The thing about my husband is that his moods are so cyclical. He’ll appear at the door. I haven’t seen him for weeks now. Suddenly he’s home, and it’s like being on a honeymoon. We’ll spend hours in bed. We’ll spend days catching up with each other. But then, after a while, I start noticing the symptoms. I’ll look at my cupboard. All my cans have become alphabetized. When I open the freezer, all the fruit juice is color coded. I watch him get antsy. I can see the time weighing on him.” Once the pilot leaves for the next assignment, there is a temptation for the spouse to respond in an equally dysfunctional manner. “Then off he goes again – and I’m left with PTA meetings. I shortcut the laundry. I cheat on my kitchen duty. During the days he was home we had pot roasts and veal dishes. Now the children and I will have Domino’s pizza. It’s a crazy kind of life, but it’s the life that I’m used to.” If these patterns are left uncorrected over years, they can lead to resentments, bitterness and an increased vulnerability to family breakdown. As the author, who is a career pilot, bluntly states, “I have to admit, our profession is divorce-ridden.”³³ Reading this section and gaining a perspective of a spouse and family was valuable in understanding the challenges faced by these families. Correctly understanding a challenge is often the first step in finding a solution. This transparent look at the life of a pilot’s family helped to identify areas of challenge where the FRG could make an impact on the family dynamics of military pilots.

33. Captain “X” and Dodson, *Unfriendly Skies*, 168.

Returning Home by Robert M. Hicks

The book *Returning Home* is designed to be a tool to help military families during a deployment. I chose to read this book with an interest in studying theories of separation and reunion. However, what caught my interest even more in this book was a section concerning the study of stress. The breakdown of families is often the compounded effects of stressors in life. As these stressors build, if they are not diffused or managed appropriately, they leave a family vulnerable to temptations, conflict and dissolution. For these reasons, it seemed wise to include a section on stress garnered from the writings in this book into the FRG.

When discussing stress, the book helps the reader to understand that it can be magnified many times over during the absence of a spouse such as during the time of separation while deployed. The author makes the point that a person needs to understand that stress is contagious. As observed in the book, “It is toxic. It is like a poisonous gas that seeps through an area. It contaminates everyone it touches. Stress spreads through words and glances and changed behavior. If I am stressed by a crisis and you love me then you are stressed, too.”³⁴ The author encourages those who are away in potentially very extreme situations not to make light of the anxiety of spouses and other family members back home. Many people struggle with worry in the face of stress and for this reason, worry as a response to stress is addressed as well. Worrying is a way of preparing for disaster. The person worrying is anticipating the grieving process. They begin imagining the worst outcome and get ready emotionally for it. What is happening is that a worrier is preparing to deal with the stress of grieving.³⁵ This dysfunctional

34. Robert M. Hicks. *Returning Home*. (Tarrytown, NY: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1991), 67.

35. Hicks, *Returning Home*, 68.

method of dealing with stress is introduced by a quote from Shakespeare that, “cowards die a thousand times before their deaths.” As the author correctly observes, worriers do too.

Addressing these challenges, the author poses a probing question then offers insights and practical helps. The author asks, “Why do some people hurt more than others? Why do some people have a more difficult time in dealing with stress and worry, particularly as it applies to times of separation during deployments?”³⁶ Although the author is writing to families facing the effects of deployment which are common to all military members, I believe that the psychological elements can transfer to the strains from separations of military pilots as well. The insights on why there are variations among individuals in how they handle stress begins with examining an inborn resilience which allows some people to be born with an ability to endure hardship better than others. There are other additional factors which can help a person to strengthen their ability to handle higher levels of stress effectively. Previous exposure to stress, if it has been resolved effectively, can have the effect of “inoculating” a person to further stressors. These can contribute to furthering a person’s point in individual development in regards to stress management. Healthy individuals are continually learning things, assimilating the things they’ve learned, or questioning things which then results in a trajectory of growth which enables them to more effectively handle stress. These processes are leading them to increasing levels of ability to handle stress and can be further strengthened through social supports. These social supports can be found from numerous sources such as friends and family but also from a church or social group. Chaplains and counselors can also be utilized as sources of social supports to manage stress. As the author states, one of the greatest coping mechanisms

36. Hicks, *Returning Home*, 69.

in times of stress is to restore a daily routine.³⁷ These insights and practical helps hold tremendous value in helping military pilots and their families to weather the accompanying stressors of service as a military pilot.

General Relationship Resilience Literature

The Five Languages of Apology by Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas

In a perfect world there would be no need for apologies. However, because the world is imperfect, we cannot survive without them. This is the rationale presented in the book *The Five Languages of Apology*. As Chapman and Thomas state, without apologies anger builds and pushes people to demand justice. When individuals feel that justice is not forthcoming, they often react in unhealthy ways.³⁸ In a family, if this cycle is left unchecked then it can lead to patterns of extreme dysfunction. A key way to stopping this cycle is to understand and apply the principles found in *The Five Languages of Apology*. Different people respond to apologies in different ways. The author refers to these different ways of responding to apologies as a person's forgiveness "language." Learning how apologizing works and committing to do it well can change the lives of military pilots and their families.

Among the languages of apology described by the author are expressing regret, accepting responsibility, making restitution, genuinely repenting and requesting forgiveness. The first language of apology is expressing regret. It is expressing to the offended person a sense of guilt and shame, and pain that an individual's behavior has hurt them deeply. The second language is accepting responsibility. For many individuals, hearing the words "I was wrong" is what

37. Hicks, *Returning Home*, 67.

38. Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas. *The Five Languages of Apology*. (Chicago, IL: Northfield Publishing, 2006), 19.

communicates to them that the person is sincere in offering their apology. Without these or similar words that accept responsibility for one's wrong behavior, the offended person will not sense that the other person has sincerely apologized. The third language is making restitution. In the sphere of family relationships, a desire for restitution is almost always based upon a need for love. After being hurt deeply, there is a need for the reassurance that the person who caused the hurt still loves the individual who received the pain. The fourth language is genuinely repenting which means "to turn around" or "to change one's mind." In the context of an apology, the person regrets that pain that he or she is causing the other person and they choose to change their behavior accordingly. Finally, there is the language of requesting forgiveness. Requesting forgiveness shows that a person is willing to put the future of the relationship in the hands of the offended person. It is a choice that he or she must make – to forgive or not forgive. Mastering these languages of apology can break the cycle of hurt and conflict in a family and result in reconciliation. Reconciliation means that the members of the family have put the issue behind them and are now facing the future together.

The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman

This highly popular book has been a major force in strengthening families. The author presents keen insights into relationship dynamics and how to best communicate to one another. The author notes that each person comes to marriage with a different personality and history. In a healthy marriage, these variety of differences must be processed and learned to be managed. If they are not, a cycle develops which often leads to infidelity and the end of the relationship. In order to make these principles more easily understood, the author describes these differences as

love languages. The premise of this book is that if a couple learns to speak one another's love language then the relationship can remain vibrant and healthy.

Before presenting the love languages, the author begins by presenting the case for their value. He begins with the observation that “thousands of husbands and wives have been there – emotionally empty, wanting to do the right thing, not wanting to hurt anyone, but being pushed by their emotional need to seek love outside the marriage. Unfortunately, there is a difference between the in-love experience and the emotional need to feel loved. Most in our society have not yet learned that difference.”³⁹ He then further describes the cycle of couples “falling out of love” as it is commonly understood in popular culture. “In marriage, over time, we come down from that natural high back to the real world. If our spouse has learned to speak our primary love language, our need for love will continue to be satisfied. If, on the other hand, he or she does not speak the other's love language, their tank will slowly drain, and they will no longer feel loved. After some years of living with an empty love tank, she will likely “fall in love” with someone else, and the cycle will begin again.

The author asserts that there is a predictable cycle to a person falling in love, becoming disillusioned and then having the relationship end. Once the season of feeling “in love” has run its natural course, a person will begin to assert their unmet needs in a relationship.⁴⁰ This can lead to hurts and conflict as needs remain unmet and idealized perceptions of the other person become shattered. Initially, the “in love” experience temporarily meets these needs and can blind a person to personality differences. However, this season of a relationship has a limited

39. Gary D. Chapman. *The Five Love Languages*. (Chicago, IL: Northfield Publishing, 2004), 135.

40. Chapman, *Five Love Languages*, 32.

and predictable life span. After a person comes down from the high of the “in love” obsession, the emotional need for love resurfaces because it is fundamental to human nature.⁴¹ Some couples believe that the end of the in-love experience means they have only two options: resign themselves to a life of misery with their spouse or jump ship and try again.⁴² Research seems to indicate that there is a third and better alternative: A person can recognize the in-love experience for what it was – a temporary emotional high – and now pursue “real love” with their spouse. That kind of love is emotional in nature but not obsessional. It is a love that unites reason and emotion. It involves an act of the will and requires discipline as it recognizes the need for personal growth.⁴³

This cycle leading to family breakdown can be broken if a person begins to understand and act according to the emotional love language of their spouse. Unfortunately, the love language of one spouse to another can be as different as Chinese from English. So, no matter how hard one partner tries to express their love in English, if their spouse understands only Chinese, they will never understand how to adequately express their love to each other.⁴⁴ The book asserts that discovering the primary love language of a spouse is essential if they are to maintain an emotionally healthy and fulfilling relationship. These love languages are described as Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Receiving Gifts, Acts of Service and Physical Touch. In order to discern the correct love language, the author suggests asking several questions. “What makes you feel most loved by your spouse? What do you desire above all else? What have you

41. Chapman, *Five Love Languages*, 21.

42. Chapman, *Five Love Languages*, 32.

43. Chapman, *Five Love Languages*, 32.

44. Chapman, *Five Love Languages*, 15.

most often requested of your spouse? The thing that a person most often requests is likely the thing that would make them feel most loved.”⁴⁵ The author then elaborates on each of these love languages and how to best express love to a spouse in a way which speaks loudly in their language. Military pilots experience frequent periods of separation which can limit opportunities for communication. Being able to speak a spouse’s love language fluently seems to be especially valuable for these military pilot families.

His Needs, Her Needs by Willard F. Harley, Jr.

His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair-Proof Marriage is, in my opinion, the best book available to strengthen family resiliency for military pilots and their families. It has been influential in my life and I recommend it to every couple that I see for pre-marriage counseling. The book is a very honest examination of the risks to temptation which result from areas of potential weakness among couples. Time away from home can create multiple opportunities to succumb to temptation. Unfortunately, many military pilots fall to these temptations when away from their family. This book can provide invaluable tools to keep relationships strong enough to withstand these temptations.

The author explains the process of family breakdown by observing that at one point two people are irresistible to each other. This irresistibility led them to make a lifetime commitment in marriage. However, as couples leave each other’s needs unmet they transition from irresistible to feeling incompatible. When someone outside the marriage offers to meet those unmet needs, an affair starts. The key to avoid this process is to understand his needs and her needs within a marriage. According to psychologists, the following are the basic needs of a

45. Chapman, *Five Love Languages*, 136.

husband and wife. As long as these needs are being met, the couple remains irresistible to each other. Any husband can make himself irresistible to his wife by learning to meet her five most important emotional needs. He must show her affection by telling her that he loves her with words, cards, flowers, gifts, and common courtesies. Then he must make frequent conversation by setting time aside every day to talk to her. She must know that he practices honesty and openness by telling her everything about himself, leaving nothing out that might later surprise her. He assumes responsibility for financial support by assuming the responsibility to house, feed, and clothe the family. While he may encourage his wife to pursue a career, he does not depend on her salary for living expenses. He shows a family commitment by dedicating sufficient time and energy to the moral and educational development of the children. It is not enough for a man to strive to meet three or four of these needs, he must continually strive for meet all of them to remain irresistible.

In the same way, a wife makes herself irresistible to her husband by learning to meet his five most important emotional needs. His first need in order to resist temptation is sexual fulfillment by having his wife seeking to become a terrific sexual partner. He also needs to see his wife as his recreational companion as she develops an interest in the recreational activities he enjoys most and tries to become proficient at them. If she finds she cannot enjoy them, she encourages him to consider other activities that they can enjoy together. An irresistible wife does not need to be a super model but must seek to maintain physical attractiveness by keeping herself physically fit with diet and exercise and wearing her hair, makeup, and clothes in a way that he finds attractive and tasteful. She seeks to show domestic support by creating a home that offers him a refuge from the stresses of life. Finally, she must display admiration for him by reminding him of his value and achievements and helping him to maintain his self-confidence.

Knowing and applying the principles found in this book can help a military pilot of either gender to protect their family from falling to temptation. It is an invaluable tool and its' concepts are a key element of the FRG.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT DESIGN

Project Parameters

The goal of the research for this thesis-project was to discern the correct information to include in the FRG. There are numerous books, articles and training materials related to the topic of family resiliency. From my experiences in leading marriage and family conferences for military members as well as personal readings, I have an appreciation of the wide breadth of sources which could be utilized. As presented in the literature review chapter, the available material is presented at various levels based upon age, stage of life and family status. The challenge in formulating the FRG was to correctly assess which topics to address and which to omit. As has been said, “the good can often get in the way of the best.” The purpose of this research was to discern the best of the available material for the target audience of military pilots.

I have been fortunate to have a career which has spanned multiple components of the Air Force’s Total Force.¹ As a military chaplain, I have had the opportunity to serve as a chaplain (candidate) in the Air Force Reserve, as a chaplain in the Air National Guard and as a chaplain in the active component of the Air Force. Even within this same branch of the service, I have experienced radically different cultures within each component of the Total Force. When designing a guide which would be valuable to pilots of all military branches, I was very aware of the underlying differences in cultures between the various branches of service. To understand

1. The Air Force’s Total Force includes regular Air Force, Air National Guard of the United States, Air Force Reserve military personnel, US Air Force military retired members, US Air Force civilian personnel and the Civil Air Patrol, as the official Air Force Auxiliary.

the needs of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard required reaching out to pilots from each of these services to assess what they would find most helpful given their particular mission sets and service demands.

In order to adequately assess these needs, I utilized a three-level approach consisting of surveys, open ended questions and informational interviews. The first level of research was a survey consisting of 10 questions based on a Likert Scale. The assumption was that this survey type would be easy enough to answer so that the majority of those asked would be willing to take the time to complete it. The next level of research consisted of an open-ended question of “why” placed below the Likert Scale on each question. This provided the opportunity for participants to elaborate on their answer or to express any strongly held conviction or opinion concerning the topic addressed on the Likert Scale. For the final level of research, informational interviews were conducted. By relying on informational interviews, the research data could be varied based on each person’s individual experiences and frame of reference. As with most people, pilots love to talk about themselves and it was possible to gather quite a bit of qualitative data during these informational interviews. By inviting various pilots to meet in one on one settings, I found that they were very open to sharing both their successes and failures in balancing their professional and family lives. This three-level approach to research provided an opportunity to gather both a breadth and depth of information in assessing the proper content to include in the FRG.

Project Participants

I was very grateful for the opportunity to engage a wide spectrum of military pilots during the research phase of this thesis-project. This was made possible through my civilian position as an instructor pilot specializing in providing flight training to corporate pilots. Many

of these corporate pilots who I have had the opportunity to train have backgrounds in military aviation. In addition, a number of my fellow instructor pilots were either former military pilots or current military pilots serving bi-vocationally in the Reserve or National Guard.

Due to the uniqueness of this workplace environment, I was able to meet and conduct research with pilots from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. The breadth of the assessment of needs was further enhanced by conducting research with pilots who had served on active duty, in the Reserve and in the National Guard. This wonderful diversity of military aviation backgrounds allowed for trends to be identified between the various cultures of military aviation.

Survey Instrument

The survey format chosen was the Likert Scale with open-ended “why” questions. The advantage of the Likert Scale was that it allowed for a rapid means of collecting the desired data. Given the target population, I understood that I would be approaching prospective participants in a workplace setting. Knowing that potential participants would be in a time sensitive situation, the ease of completing a Likert Scale survey seemed to have the potential to increase participation. Further, the addition of opened ended “why” questions allowed a participant who felt strongly about a topic to elaborate on their response. This combination of a basic Likert Scale with an opportunity for elaboration allowed survey participants to provide both quantitative and qualitative information.

In order to ensure a sense of confidentiality in completing the survey, I provided an informational cover page informing the participants that this would be a “non-attributional survey.” This statement, which also included a definition of the term “non-attributional,” was added in order to encourage the participants to elaborate on “why” a person chose their answer

on the Likert Scale. Once agreeing to complete the survey, each participant was provided a paper copy with this introduction on the first page, the survey instrument on the second and third pages and an envelope to seal and return the completed survey to me. As I was providing the survey packet to each person, I asked them specifically to not place their name on the envelope nor the survey itself. This was done in order to add a further layer of assurance concerning the non-attributional nature of the information collected.

The introductory page to the Relationship Resilience Survey is provided below:

Relationship Resilience Survey

Thank you for being willing to participate in this survey. It is my hope that your input will guide me in developing a training tool that will impact the quality of life for military pilots and their families.

I request that you please fill in the attached survey and return it to me.

This is a non-attributional survey, meaning that whatever you choose to share will remain anonymous.

Thank you, again!

Robert Stone
Chaplain (Major)
United States Air Force

Survey Instrument Explanation

The survey begins with a request for demographic information. As stated above, the goal of the survey was to assess which topics would have the most value for military pilots. I postulated that the topics rated as most beneficial would vary based on a number of factors including: military branch of service, component of the Total Force, number of deployments, rank, age and life perspective based on age and time since completing military service. As a

cross reference, I included a section on civilian aviation experience as well. This information most directly applied to military pilots serving in the Reserve or National Guard. Most often, a pilot in the Reserve or National Guard will choose to utilize their skill set as a civilian pilot as well.

The first two questions were designed to provide an initial assessment of how a person viewed the stress level of serving as a military pilot on their family. I theorized that how a person completed this first question would indicate the severity of their answers to the more specific topical questions which followed. The second question was designed as a comparison tool to determine whether a person felt that the stress on their family was caused solely by serving as a pilot and the lifestyle issues which are common to pilots in general. The answers to these first two questions could be compared to determine the perceived additional stress level of military aviation. This comparison had the potential to determine if the military pilots were experiencing the effect of compounding stressors common to the majority of all civilian and military pilots overlaid with the stressors common to all members of the military (ie. deployments, TDY's, PCS and combat).

The eight questions which followed asked participants to assess the perceived value of various topics related to family resilience. Potentially, dozens of topics could have been selected. However, creating a survey which would be well received required the list to be narrowed. In order to choose the topics, I relied on experience with leading military marriage retreats, family retreats, financial workshops, personal readings and anecdotal stories concerning challenges which military pilots have faced.

The topics "Developing Family Traditions," "Re-Integration After Time Apart," and "Financial Management" were the result of leading military conferences. National Guard Strong

Bonds conferences are targeted at couples and families with a member that is preparing to deploy or has recently returned from a deployment. This led to the interest in assessing whether military pilots, who live a continual pattern of separation and re-union would find as much value in these topics as the military population as a whole who are deployed and separated far less frequently. The topic on “Developing Family Traditions” was selected from the curriculum 7 *Habits of Highly Effective Families*. As discussed in the prior literature review, the various conference materials available for Strong Bonds conferences are targeted at different levels of audience maturity, background and season of life. “Developing Family Traditions” seems to be a more “basic level” topic which I thought might be of particular value to those who do not have a stable family background. Given that until very recently all military pilots were officers² with college educations, I was curious to assess whether this socio-economic demographic would find value in more “basic-level” family resiliency skills. The interest in “Financial Management” stems from being assigned to lead a course entitled, *Financial Peace University* by Dave Ramsey while serving on active duty at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. The turnout for this course vastly exceeded my expectations. I was also surprised at the number of officers who would share stories of mismanaging their family’s finances and working towards restoring financial security.

The topics on “Showing Domestic Support,” “Recreational Companionship” and “Conflict Resolution” stem from my personal readings. When conducting pre-marriage counseling, I always recommend the book *His Needs, Her Needs: Building An Affair Proof Marriage*. It is my belief that this is the most honest and succinct book on the topic of potential

2. The Air Force conducted the first officer/enlisted combined training course since the Second World War in October 2016. The first two enlisted students graduated and received their pilot wings in May 2017.

risks to a healthy marriage and family. The book is further enhanced by providing practical steps on how to best mitigate these risks. Knowing that conflict is a natural part of any family, I also included an assessment for “Conflict Resolution.” This topic was inspired from reading the book *The 5 Languages of Apology*.

The topics on “Temptation and How to Survive an Affair” and “Communication Skills” were selected due to anecdotal stories of the “pilot lifestyle.” The phrase “fighter jock” has a strong basis in the actual culture. Fighter pilots, along with the majority of younger military pilots, tend to adopt a culture of bravado and of “working hard, playing hard.” As a chaplain to operational flying squadrons, I have heard numerous phrases such as, “I can’t wait to make her my future ex-wife” and “what goes TDY stays TDY.” Temptation and peer pressure is a continual part of the military pilot culture even as there is mounting pressure from leadership to transform these aspects of the culture. On a more positive note, I was inspired to include the topic on “Communication Skills” based on comments from an Air Force Special Operations C-130 pilot. During a class discussion while we were both students at the Air Force’s Squadron Officer School,³ this pilot shared that his parish priest had given he and his wife a copy of the book *The 5 Love Languages*. The pilot explained that he can be completely out of communication from his wife for weeks at a time due to the nature of his special operations missions. He further explained that this book had proven invaluable to he and his wife as they sought to maintain connection during times of sparse communication opportunities.

The Relationship Resilience Survey is provided below:

3. The Air Force’s Squadron Officer School is a 6.5 week educational experience for USAF captains. The course is structured around four primary areas (1) leadership, (2) building highly-effective teams, (3) logical and ethical reasoning in decision making, and (4) multi-domain joint warfare.

Relationship Resilience Survey

In order to assist in the completion of a doctoral thesis focusing on strengthening relationship resiliency among military pilots, please complete the following survey. Each question begins with a measuring between 1-5 of how well you agree with the statement, 1 being totally disagree and 5 being totally agree. Next, you will have an opportunity to provide any comments on why you answered with that particular value.

Demographics:

Total time in the uniformed services?

How long as a member of the National Guard or Reserve?

If no longer actively serving, how long since separation or retirement?

Branch?

Rank?

Length of time as a professional civilian pilot?

Type of civilian pilot? (Airline / Corporate / Fractional / Instructor / Other)

Questions:

1. Service as a military pilot places significant strain on marriages and families.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

2. A career as a civilian pilot places significant strain on marriages and families.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

3. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Conflict Resolution*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

4. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Financial Management*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

5. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Re-integration After Time Apart*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

6. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Temptation and How to Survive an Affair*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

7. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Communication Skills*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

8. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Showing Domestic Support*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

9. Professional pilots would benefit from training on developing *Recreational Companionship*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

10. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Developing Family Traditions*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

Informational Interview “Talking Points”

In order to gain even more clarity as to which topics would be of most value to military pilots, I also conducted a series of informational interviews. Three of the individuals who agreed to meet for informational interviews also completed the written survey. One informational interview was conducted via e-mail at the preference of the person agreeing to the interview. Two of the informational interviews were conducted before the Relationship Resilience Survey had been developed. These informational interviews were conducted in a variety of locations including a pilot’s office at the 136th Airlift Wing in Fort Worth, TX, at the CAE training facility in Dallas, TX and at the FlightSafety International’s pilot training center in Orlando, FL.⁴

Having a broad concept of the information which would make up the eventual FRG, I developing relatively detailed “talking points” for the informational interviews. However, after conducting the first two informational interviews, I realized that each person had a particular set of experiences, values and passions which they wanted to pass on to others. I observed that the more freedom which I allowed for the person to speak, the more transparent they would be with providing valuable observations and experiences. As a result of this observation, I modified my list of “talking points” to allow more freedom for the person to guide the conversation in the direction which they felt would be most valuable to military pilots.

The original “talking points” began with demographic information. This seemed to create a stilted beginning to the conversation which set a tone that was less conducive to the free flow of memories and experiences. Further, I observed that adhering to a detailed list of “talking points” caused the conversations to revolve too much around the subject areas that *I* wanted to

4. CAE and FlightSafety International are both aviation corporations which provide aviation training through ground school lectures and simulators to military, corporate and airline pilots leading to both their initial and re-current pilot qualifications to fly specific aircraft.

cover. I discerned that this format was causing me to lead the conversation too much. Using this original format, it was only when I had finished asking for what *I* wanted to learn that the person being interviewed felt free to share what they felt was most important to them based on their first-hand experience.

After the first two informational interviews, I altered my “talking points” to allow for an increased free flow of the wisdom which can be only found from personal experience. The questions were changed from very specific to open and general. I had observed that the most valuable information was conveyed through the telling of stories which would illustrate a truth about human nature and relationship resilience. Following this change in format, the informational interviews quickly became far more personal. I also began to sense a desire in those being interviewed to help others through the sharing of their own failings and mistakes. These informational interviews became invaluable in understanding the “heart” of these seasoned military pilots and how to best serve others.

The original and modified informational interview “Talking Points” are provided below:

Informational Interview “Talking Points” – Original

1. Personal Background:
 - a. Age -
 - b. Marriage -
 - c. Kids -
2. Number of Deployments -

3. Biggest Challenges while Traveling / Deployment -

- a. While on Shorter Term Trips -

4. Biggest Marriage Challenges -

- a. Finances –
- b. Conflict Resolution –
- c. Parenting Styles / Challenges –
 - 1. Discipline of Children –
 - 2. Children's needs – (ie. Doctor visits, teacher conferences, games)
- f. "Peer Pressure" on the Road –
- g. Communication –
- h. Household Responsibilities –

5. Faith in Action while Traveling / Deployed

- a. How did faith play into time away?
- b. What tools, disciplines helped?
- c. Which tools, disciplines did not help?

6. Biggest Prayer Requests during deployment?

Informational Interview “Talking Points” – Modified Based on Experience

1. Military Pilot Background
2. Deployments
3. Length
4. How Did You Prepare
5. Observations on Those Who Balanced It Well
6. Observations on Those Who Struggled
7. Ways to Serve

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

My first flight as a professional airline pilot was the realization of a childhood dream. Much like my wedding day or the day my children were born, I can remember it in vivid detail. I flew a Saab 340 turboprop airliner which held 36 passengers from New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport on a roughly two-hour long flight to Raleigh-Durham Airport. I can remember a flight attendant bringing a Coke to the cockpit for me to drink and my captain jokingly reminding me that the airliner – which felt enormous to me at the time – “flies like an airplane.” Later that evening, that same airline captain, who was a retired Air Force B-52 navigator, offered to buy me a drink at the hotel bar to celebrate my first flight as an airline pilot. It was his tradition he told me. He then asked me if I would like to hear some advice that he gave to the new pilots about budgeting and finances. At the time, new pilots had to live frugally during their first year on what was known as “probation year pay.” He said that he offered to share his advice with all of the new pilots. This was his tradition as well. I eagerly accepted his offer of advice and as he began he said, “would you mind if I shared my view about finances from the Bible? The Bible is important to me and it is how I made my decisions.” This was his way of evangelism. He would reach a felt need in the life of pilots and meet that need in a practical way. At the same time, he introduced them to the spiritual truths of a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Just as this airline captain built a bridge between pilots and the Gospel, my hope is that the results of this thesis-project can be used in similar ways.

The ultimate result of the research for this thesis-project was the creation of the 81-page FRG. This guide is listed as “Appendix A” at the end of this thesis. Research was conducted in

the creation of this guide in order to discern what material would be of the most use to military pilots and their families in strengthening their family resiliency. The results of this research, in combination with readings related to the topic, led to the final content and format of the FRG.

When the FRG was completed, I excitedly posted about it on my Facebook account. I offered to e-mail a copy of it to anyone who was interested. In less than 24 hours, I had received 12 requests. Among those requesting copies were two Air Force fighter pilots, an Air Force transport pilot, three corporate pilots, one major airline pilot and the daughter of a former Air Force pilot. As the weeks progressed, more requests came in. Spouses of career Air Force pilots, the daughter of a retired Air Force general, fellow chaplains, others in vocational ministry all reached out to request copies. Some chaplains offered suggestions on how to further disseminate the FRG. Fellow chaplains suggested offering it to the Air Force Chaplain Corps' resource center and a former classmate suggested offering it to the military ministry division of the Navigators. It appeared that with just one Facebook post that a spark was lit that ignited a powder keg of the Holy Spirit beginning to work through the results of this thesis-project.

For the purpose of this chapter, a review will be made of the evolution of the FRG from first concepts to the final product. An analysis will then be provided of how the final content was discerned. The primary driver of the final content selection was informational interviews conducted with current and former military pilots. Common topics and themes which ran throughout these interviews are divided topically and summarized within this chapter. This summary is followed by the notes from the interviews provided in outline form with demographic information provided about the person who was interviewed. These notes have not been altered from when they were originally taken during the interviews in order to preserve the flow of thought and emphasis of the information provided by the military pilot.

The results of a Likert Scale survey on the topic of relationship resiliency is then provided in a graphical format. There are two sets of graphs which provide representation of the perceived benefits of various topics according to branch of military service and component of the total force. The survey itself is then provided with textual answers provided in bold print from those who completed the survey which explain “why” they chose their answer. Finally, suggestions are made for the further advancement of this project so that the work begun can continue to be expanded in both content and reach.

Evolution of the Family Resiliency Guide

The evolution of the FRG can be seen through comparing the table of contents which were prepared over the years while enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry program. When initially envisioned, the guide was very different in both content and format than it is in the final product. Beginning in 2014, the vision for the FRG was that the content would be a combination of stories and wisdom that would be gained through informational interviews. For this reason, the earliest research focused heavily on identifying military pilot candidates and conducting informational interviews. The format of the guide was envisioned as mirroring an aviation technical manual. At the time, I was employed in a civilian position as an instructor pilot training corporate pilots. The aviation training company where I was employed had a division which published training manuals on a series of aviation related topics. One section of this division was identified as “Advanced Airmanship Courses” and had a team of individuals that would research, create literature and then teach courses on specialized aviation topics such as “Fatigue in the Cockpit,” “Crew Resource Management” and other courses related to human factors. The idea was to use a similar process such as I observed from this specialized department at my company to develop a similar curriculum on the topic of family resiliency. I gathered a collection of this

department's training guides and was planning to use their format as a guide for the final product of this thesis-project. An additional part of the original vision was to contextualize the concepts of family resiliency by equating them to aviation terms and concepts which would be familiar to all pilots. As I pondered which aviation concepts to use as a "bridge" to teach family resiliency skills, I decided to go to the basics of aviation training. I purchased the most popular textbook for training private pilots with the knowledge that all pilots had at one time been required to learn these basic principles. Therefore, all pilots would have a baseline foundation for understanding the concepts which I would be addressing. I went through the textbook, chapter by chapter, and thought through a concept which seemed appropriate to family resiliency that connected to each of the textbook's chapters. As mentioned previously, the intended topics were a combination of concepts from literature and topics which I hoped to explore through informational interviews.

By 2016, I had conducted several informational interviews, begun the process of reviewing literature and had started to "bounce ideas" off of other chaplains and pilots. Based on feedback, my vision for the FRG had evolved. The decision was made to rely solely on previously researched and proven concepts from literature on the topics of marriage and family counseling. The format was also modified to not as closely mirror the private pilot textbook. This would prevent the contextualization from overshadowing the primary content on the topic of family resiliency. The first challenge that this presented was in discerning which topics related to family resiliency to include from the vast amount of resources available. A further challenge was to identify which aviation concepts would most connect and capture the interest of the pilots reading the final product.

In 2018, I entered a season of life where I was able to dedicate the significant time and energy required to complete the FRG. During this time, I conducted the majority of the relationship resilience surveys. I realized by this time that the most valuable information which needed to be identified through research was which topics to include in the guide. The opportunity also was presented to expand the breadth of informational interviews to include members of all branches of military service and components of the total force. The gathering of this information allowed an understanding of the common themes identified by pilots of all military branches.

In 2019, the final form of contextualization for the FRG was determined from an unexpected source. As a part of my duties as a military chaplain, I am invited to attend meetings of the senior leaders of my unit. The purpose of these meetings is for each leader to brief the unit's commander on their area of responsibility and to align those in leadership positions to the commander's priorities. In my current position, I am allowed a few minutes at the beginning of these meetings to address those in leadership as their chaplain. These brief moments are some of the most rewarding experiences of my ministry. These times are essentially "devotionals" where I present a topic related to leadership, ethics or interpersonal skills. I consider these few minutes as a key opportunity to speak spiritual truths into the lives of individuals who may never enter the doors of a church building. For this reason, I dedicate a large amount of time into crafting these "chaplain moments."

At the end of our monthly drill in January of 2019, I was asked by a Lieutenant Colonel in our unit about my presentation at the commander's meeting. This officer was completing Air War College¹ at the time and he asked me if he could share my presentation on an internet-based

1. The Air War College is the senior professional military education school of the United States Air Force. It emphasizes the employment of air, space and cyberspace forces in joint operations.

group discussion board as part of his course requirements. I had a folded copy of my two minute “devotional” in my pocket which I handed to him so that he could use it for his course in the Air War College. In that moment, I realized that these “devotionals” which I had been writing and presenting for years could be used in the FRG. This Lieutenant Colonel was not a Christian and did not attend chapel. Yet, this “devotional” had connected with him and had built a bridge to the spiritual truth which it addressed. As I continued to work on the FRG during the week that followed this encounter, I made a further discovery. I began to browse through books which I owned that discussed aviation history. What I discovered was that each of the books made use of the technique of having interesting side stories written in separate boxes of text throughout the material. By interspersing captivating, lighter material to keep a reader engaged with the text, the reader would continue to read the weightier material as well. I realized that this was a proven technique of presenting weightier topics while maintaining a reader’s interest. This encounter with the Lieutenant Colonel and follow-on exploration led to the final format of the FRG.

I am very pleased with this final format for the FRG. In the final format, it is now a guide which teaches family resiliency skills as well as presents Biblical concepts. It is now also a tool for evangelism. During the military drill after the Lieutenant Colonel’s request sparked a vision for this format, I went and thanked him for how he had impacted my doctoral thesis. This show of appreciation built a bridge between us and he is now a regular attendee at our monthly chapel service. He has also come to my office to show me videos which he has viewed on apologetics. It has been a tremendous blessing and gift to me to see how God is already choosing to work in people’s lives through the creation of this thesis-project.

Thesis-Project Chapters – As of 2014

STAGE 1

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Discovering Aviation | Introduction to Material |
| 2. Airplane Systems | 5 Love Languages |
| 3. Aerodynamic Principles | Words from those done it Well / Fallen |
| 4. The Flight Environment | Separation and Staying Connected When Separated |
| 5. Communication & Flight Information | Speaker – Listener Technique |

STAGE 2

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6. Meteorology for Pilots | 4 Seasons of Marriage |
| 7. Federal Aviation Regulations | His Needs, Her Needs |
| 8. Interpreting Weather Data | Temptations |

STAGE 3

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 9. Airplane Performance | Support – Family / Community / Place of Worship |
| 10. Navigation | 7 Habits of Family – End in Mind |
| 11. Human Factors Principles | Re-Unification – (After a trip / two months) |
| 12. Flying Cross Country | Restoration and Hope for Strained Families |

Thesis-Project Chapters – As of 2016

| Topic | Illustration | Book Source |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Mission Statement | Introduction / Mixed | <i>7 Habits</i> |
| 2. Conflict Resolution | Flying Cross-Country | 5 Languages of Apology |
| 3. Financial Management | Recovery from Lost Comm | <i>Financial Peace</i> <i>Finances God's Way</i> |
| 4. Re-Integration | Navigation | <i>The Road Home</i> |
| 5. Temptation / Survive an Affair | Human Factors | <i>His Needs, Her Needs</i> <i>Total Forgiveness</i> |
| 6. Communication Skills | Communication | <i>5 Love Languages</i> |
| 7. Showing Domestic Support | | <i>His Needs, Her Needs</i> |
| 8. Recreational Companionship | Weather | <i>His Needs, Her Needs</i> |
| 9. Developing Family Traditions | Maintenance | <i>7 Habits</i> |

Thesis-Project Chapters – As of 2019

How Love Works

- A Spouse's Perspective
- The Chemistry of Love
- The Stress of Life
- When Love Fades
- How to Begin to Fight for Your Marriage

The 5 Love Languages

- Introduction
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Words of Affirmation

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

- Introduction
- His Need : Sexual Fulfillment
- His Need : Recreational Companionship
- His Need : An Attractive Spouse
- His Need : Domestic Support
- His Need : Admiration
- Her Need : Affection
- Her Need : Conversation
- Her Need : Honesty and Openness
- Her Need : Financial Commitment
- Her Need : Family Commitment

Family Traditions

- What are Family Traditions?
- Ideas for Family Traditions

Apologizing Well

- Expressing Regret
- Accepting Responsibility
- Restitution – Making Amends
- Repentance
- Requesting Forgiveness

Creating a Family Mission Statement

Correcting for the Wind

Charting Your Course

A Destination and a Compass

The Checklist

Human Factors

The Little Aviators

Flight Planning

Flying Your Course

Informational Interviews

The informational interviews conducted provided valuable insight in the creation of the FRG. These interviews provided information which shed light into the unique challenges faced by these military pilots. It seemed that the challenges felt most acutely by those interviewed were a reflection of their own personalities. Times of separation seemed to bring out areas of vulnerability and strength. Both through the recollection of their own experiences and memory of the experiences of those with whom they served, powerful lessons were shared. Throughout these interviews, which were conducted with military pilots of various ages, ranks and branches of service, common themes could be discerned. These common themes drove the selection of the content for the FRG.

Common Themes

1. Preparation is the Key

One of the key themes which was consistent throughout the informational interviews was the need for preparation. These needed preparations spanned a range from plans for communication to emotional preparation. There were numerous comments made concerning the priority of having a firm plan in place for communications. From the interview of a former commander, it was emphasized that this was especially important for those on their first deployment. From the commander's perspective, the care of the first time deployers is a particular and constant priority. Many service members fall into this category. This is due to the high turnover rate in the military, especially for the enlisted. Among the practical suggestions made were to have a firm communication plan in place prior to separation. Technology can be an invaluable piece of this communication plan. Investing in a computer allows a separated pilot to communicate with their family via programs such as Skype.TM Even more, the separated

member can continue to assist with household tasks such as managing finances. In a more physical way, technology exists which can allow a person to turn on and off lights in a house and monitor activity via video cameras even when the pilot is on the complete opposite side of the world. Another form of preparation recommended was the creation of a family care plan. Even if the family dynamics do not require the creation of a plan, it was recommended to always have one. In the event of a crisis, it is wise to have a plan in place for action if something happens to a spouse at home or elderly grandparents. One commander observed that there was always a crisis for a member of his unit during each deployment. For this reason, emotional preparations were also stressed. There are many possible feelings among family members when a military member is preparing to go away. Some of these anxieties are that a person's feelings for them will change during the time separated. Other anxieties are that when the person returns that they will no longer like or love them, especially in light of possible temptations. These anxieties were observed to be significantly less among those who are second generation military members. It was observed that these individuals grew up within the culture and are more comfortable with separations. These families were observed to be extremely close because they are constantly moving and changing social circles. The total amount of preparation needed and in which areas will vary as all families are different depending on the personalities involved.

2. Division of Responsibilities

Another common theme was the need to avoid conflict by having a clear division of responsibility. Key among this division of responsibility is the disciplining of children. Shorter missions were felt to be harder to manage in regards to the disciplining of children. It was emphatically stated that this duty must be clearly defined. Particularly, it was stressed that the

returning spouse must not have a responsibility to dispense discipline soon after they return.

When asked about effective methods of dividing responsibilities, the issue was placed into the military context of “command and control.” A technique recommended was to transfer all duties for maintaining the household to the spouse which remains at home. However, care must be given to when the spouse returns home. One of the most difficult parts of a deployment or any separation has been described as when the spouse comes back home. The spouse at home has had sole authority but must now compromise and recommit to shared responsibility.

3. Finances

Finances are an area of concern as well. Among the enlisted, this was considered by some to be the biggest problem faced by separated families. Although this area seems to be more manageable during shorter times of separation, it was observed that the longer the time of separation, the harder it gets to manage this area. Suggestions for effectively managing this area are to keep a separate financial account for the deployment. It was also recommended that there be no expectation for gifts or souvenirs to be brought back for the family members. Communication about finances is a key to controlling this relationship stressor.

4. Communication

Communication was repeatedly mentioned as a major area of concern for the pilots and their families while they are travelling. A very encouraging outcome from having a broad demographic spectrum was to hear about how technology has radically changed this area. More current deployers report that FaceTime™ and e-mails make the times of separation much easier. This is in contrast to the older members interviewed who can remember being completely out of

contact while deployed, particularly among the sea services in the 1980's. Even as recently as the late 1990's, calls and e-mails were infrequent. A practical suggestion was to have a preset framework for communicating. An agenda can be established ahead of time. Although it may not always flow as idealized, business can be discussed first, then children and then the spouses can have time to connect. One caution was to avoid the use of new lingo from the deployment that the family at home will not understand. Use of unfamiliar terms can accentuate a feeling of distance or that the separated family members had adopted new ways of thinking.

5. Temptation to Infidelity

Temptation and marital breakdown were other common concerns voiced during the informational interviews. One Navy squadron commander stated that the Naval Air divorce rate was 60%. He observed that most of the time it was not the cruise itself that led to the problem but that there were marital tensions before the deployment. This situation was seen as more acute for those members who viewed time away from their family as a "vacation" from their domestic responsibilities. Often times, these were the people who found that their family was not there when they return. Interestingly, it was observed that the spouse who remained at home would more commonly stray because "there's not much to do on a ship." It was also shared that two or three out of 30 wives will disconnect and go back to family during a time of deployment. A particular challenge of this situation is if the spouse's family does not like the military member or the situation. Unfortunately, the person deployed is not there to defend themselves against accusations or negative criticism. Sometimes, once the pilot returns, the spouse does not desire or choose to come back. It was also stated that the outward signs of the stress of separation can

vary widely because each person has a different personality. Some couples, estimated at a very rare 10%, return home to find that “absence made the heart grow fonder.”

Written from a man who has weathered these challenges well over the years, counsel from scripture was shared. “My approach to relational resilience with my wife and family is pretty simple. As a pilot, I like “simple”! 1 Corinthians 10:13 states that “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.” He went on to share that equally important to an effective strategy of resilience is the verse right before it: 1 Corinthians 10:12 “So if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall.”

6. Evangelism

Although the informational interviews were not conducted specifically with committed Christians, both of the pilots who had held command were deeply committed to their faith. Their comments on faith and evangelism, particularly as they were phrased as an issue of evangelism versus command, provided keen insights on how to best be “salt and light” to military pilots. One of the former commanders summed up the appropriate role of evangelism as a commander by cautioning, “Not to have a megaphone - maybe 1 in 10 will come back but the overall result is that you look like a fanatic” His view was that it is the “Holy Spirit's job to convict, and an individual’s role to inspire a spiritual curiosity.” From his perspective, when it comes to evangelism in the military context, that “(we) don't know where they are in their faith walk, the 1st or 10th contact.”

7. Faith

Faith had a powerful impact on those interviewed who were committed Christians. They observed over years of experience that if a military pilot did not have faith then their life can be much harder. Oftentimes, military pilots can feel that they can never show the chink in their armor. They feel that they can never show weakness. The Christians had seen some military pilots fall apart in combat. Even the most “rock solid” crumble. One pilot shared about the first time that he was a part of a mission which encountered enemy fire. Some of the apparently strongest pilots “wigged out” and “flailed” in the face of their fear. Faith gives a pilot something bigger to ground their life upon. Yet, mere lukewarm faith was observed to not make a difference in a person’s life. Deeply held faith, however, made an impact that gave a pilot problem solving devices when bad things happened. The application of faith to their vocation as a pilot was inspiring when one of the pilots shared that, “prayer is a constant with me. I pray as I walk onto the plane or through the airport. I pray for my work relationships and my job performance that ultimately God would be glorified.”

Informational Interview Notes

Air Force – Active Duty

Military Pilot Background

- USAFA, Col, C-21, C-130 Gunship, F-16
- Remote 1 year Korea; 23 years, Division Chief - Personnel

Deployments

- Multiple

Length

- One year remote (unaccompanied) tour: “Only time angry at God when got that assignment”

How Did You Prepare

- Lots of pre-deployment stuff... what do you really need to do /know
 - Mentor program....
- Very junior paired with "seasoned" deployer
 - Can cross officer / enlisted lines, not often
- The informal prep is far better - one on one
 - Can't be last minute - must be ingrained in the squadron

Observations on Those Who Balanced It Well

- USAF the same - Spouses need to develop the comradery the whole time
 - Key Spouse program - pairing up more experienced with less experienced
- Finances - short tours can be done, longer gets far harder
 - Communication - for finances is the key
- Transition now coming back is far more important
 - Briefings - Some are far more important than others
- "Preparation is the key..."

Observations on Those Who Struggled

- "Perception becomes reality"
 - "When the negative sentiment is set, it grows"
 - "What is set firm, will stay"

- "Wives club, big rumor mill.... little things get blown out of proportion"
 - "1 to 10 take dial to 11 rumor mill"
 - "Social media is bad! One guy posts one pic.... in background, wives rumor mill starts"
- Shorter deployment harder in disciplining the kids
 - !!! NEED TO DEFINE !!! Returning spouse will not discipline the kids!
- Phase of life becomes more telling than chronological age
- Deployment magnifies the good and bad
- 2 or 3 out of 30 wives will disconnect and go back to family
 - Sometimes the spouse does not want / choose to come back
- Common - 3 or 4 wives bond and 'clique' - prior assignment, time at base

Ways to Serve

- How can you influence when some in squadron go and you don't
 - Made "bennies" for under helmets, wrote individual notes saying he was praying for them specifically
- EVERY 6 month deployment will have someone have a major problem
 - He and wife were the ones who were called for help
- Once a month calling the spouses
- The biggest deal is the communication piece
 - Especially those on first time, the seasoned forget what it was like
 - "the nervousness and anticipation"
 - Also, the "cripples" who latch onto someone like a 6 year old
- Flat out telling them it is OK to call you and someone
- IMPORTANT - "To say that this has happened to you is not bad, if have this mindset ... can handle it"
- Many have never deployed, high turnover rate especially for enlisted

Value of Faith for Military Pilots

- Faith - Something bigger has grounded (stabilized) you
 - Gives you problem solving devices when bad things happen
 - "What am I doing for God's plan for my life"
- If not faith - Hard life - Pilots - Feel that they can never see the kink in your armor, never weak showing
- Combat side: Faith comes far more into play
 - People fall apart in combat, "rock solid" crumble
 - Faith inspires courage
 - "When see Triple A - life changes"
 - People will "wig out" - "flail"

- "Have you written the letter home?"
 - Life changes
 - Give to the boss
- Difficult experience in Afghanistan
 - Close friends killed in DFAC bomb -was suppose to be there (insider attack - had just had lunch with them, had recommended for one to go to Afghanistan)
 - Friend from a previous church, had to go back to bomb site
 - Very afraid
 - Those who have not come to grip with mortality - really struggle
 - Faith gives you the peace that surpasses all understanding

Informational Interview Notes
Air Force – Active Duty & Air National Guard

Military Pilot Background

- US Air Force Academy graduate
- C-130 Pilot
- 15 years Active Duty
- 3 years Air National Guard

Deployments

- 3 Deployments
- 1 year long remote tour
- Current : Chief of Wing Plans

How Stayed Connected

- Phone calls
- Video phone over computer
 - Maintain communication
 - Internet cafe phone cafe

Observations on Those Who Struggled

- Communications break down
- Stressful event
- Spouse not come to base (not connected to military community)
- “Away during daughter’s entire second year of life”
 - Daughter was skittish
 - Lasted 3 or 4 years
 - 9 years old now still a ‘mommy’s girl’

Observations on Those Who Balanced It Well

- Invest in computer.
 - Can manage finances
 - Skype™
- Communication plan
- Family care plan
 - Even if not needed per Air Force policy
 - If something happens to wife and elderly grandparents
- Security system for house
 - “Whatever you value is secure”

Informational Interview Notes

Army – Reserve

Military Pilot Background

- Types of Aircraft - Fixed or Rotorcraft
- Rotorcraft - 3 years - Blackhawk
- Fixed - 5 years - RC-12

Deployments in Army

- 1 - 9 months - Bosnia

Length

- 9 Months
- Left because service / deployments placed too much strain on marriage -
- Wife pushed to leave the Army
- After 2001, tried to re-enter Coast Guard - wife shot it down

How Stayed Connected

- 1 week phone call
- Daily e-mails - kind of new then

Biggest Challenges of Flying

- Reserve - Easy
- Deployed - “no contact really”
- Don’t count calls or e-mail as family contact

How Did You Prepare

- “Not very well”
- No children at the time

Observations on Those Who Balanced It Well

- Already deeply involved with family
- Already had “regular relationship workers”
- Dedication
- Both partners were strongly committed
- Wife strong and tough makes the difference
- Man alone can’t do it without wife
- Second generation Army / Air Force brats
 - Grew up with it, very comfortable
 - They say would feel “restricted” living on one place for a long time
 - Tend to be extremely close because people always changing / moving

Observations on Those Who Struggled

- “Include myself”
- Worried if their feelings would change during time away
- Worried if you wouldn’t love them or if they would leave you
- Temptations - worried what it meant that you were so tempted

Character

- Secure in Self
- Dedicated to relationship
- Many Army buddies had “Open Relationships”
- Permission to do what wanted when deployed or say
BUT committed when home
- OK if abortions, pregnancies
- 23 deployed - 17 extramarital affairs
 - From young officers up to LtCol
 - Two young pilots lived together while deployed
 - Went right back to normal living with spouses when home
 - Declared “Open Relationships” very low, most “flat out cheating”
 - To be faithful the exception, not the norm
- “TDY - Temporarily Divorce Yourself” - “Standard Army Term”
- “Army guys would often come back from Korean deployment married - to Korean”
 - Often led to divorce
- “Most Army posts have Korean barbershops - married or divorced spouse from”
 - Why Korea?
 - Most common to be deployed away from family
 - Long time deployment - 1 year

Concluding Thoughts

- “Certain military branches attract people of certain character”
 - “Exceptional character is the exception rather than the norm in the Army”
 - “Observed that Air Force people were very different - different priority”
 - “Army - felt expected families to fail - cheaper for the Army”
-
- “If you want to be married and be in the service, you and your wife have to understand that your marriage is an extension of the service. It is hard to put it into words. If you are strong and committed, I don’t believe that any occupation will wreck you.”

Informational Interview Notes

Coast Guard – Active Duty

Military Pilot Background

- Jet Pilot
- Helicopter Pilot

Deployments in Coast Guard

- 4 - 3 to 4 months (including 1 polar deployment)
- 3 - 2 to 3 weeks
- 1 Polar deployment
 - Polar Ops could live in Mobile, AL-but keep going to South or North Pole
 - 2 year tour stationed at Mobile, AL

How Stayed Connected

- Letters
- Telephone Call
 - 1980 - at sea - no connection

Biggest Challenges of Flying

- Re-callable at all time - could never make strong plans
- MX - Search and Rescue - always on call
- TO make plans - needed to take vacation

How Did You Prepare

- Talk to them
- Transfer duties to wife
- Standing policy to let wife run the home
 - Avoided “Command and Control” Issues
 - Let wife run the show all the time

Observations on Those Who Balanced It Well

- Kept a separate financial account for deployment
- No stress from expectation to bring something back
- Enlisted biggest problem - finances

Observations on Those Who Struggled

- “Command and Control” Issues
- Finances - not paid extra while deployed
- “2 VORTAC” Rule
- Stories shared among wives -
 - Rumor will
- Stress of departure
- Those who view deployment as a “vacation” from family responsibilities
 - Often those are the people who find their family is not home when come back
- If wife goes back to family - not there to “Defend Self” if they (wife’s family) doesn’t like you or situation

Informational Interview Notes
Marine Corps – Active Duty
Navy - Reserve

Military Pilot Background

- USMC Active Duty - C-130 Pilot
- Transfer to Navy Reserve - T-6 Instructor Pilot

Deployments

- “I don’t mind Afghanistan, maybe it’s the Marine in me”
- 2 deployments
 - 7 Months
 - 9 Months

How Stayed Connected

- Skype™ and e-mail

Biggest Challenges of Flying

- Being away, time apart, extended time – FaceTime™ and E-mails a bit easier

How Did You Prepare

- Block out 3 or 4 days before deployment for quality time together

Observations on Those Who Balanced It Well

- Sam’s family made it through - did OK
 - Set realistic expectations on what the deployment will be
- Out of communications most of the time
 - Even when communicate - will be tough
- Clear picture of what this is going to be - even with kids
 - Kids’ minds still impressionable
- No false hopes of coming home early
- Second deployment was easier - once done it once not so scary
- The AWESOMENESS of coming home
 - The second deployment focused on how cool the homecoming will be

Observations on Those Who Struggled

- Buddy who wife had an affair
 - May have been problems leading up to it
 - Personality was a bit overbearing
 - Not communicate well with her - time line - lack of communication
- One guy on second deployment struggled - left early
 - During deployment was “off”
 - Family was real tight and close - not sure what the problem
 - Like Top Gun “lost the edge”
 - Was person’s first deployment

Observations on Deployment Experience

- The worst thing that can be done is take away the return day and make it an “indefinite” return - complete demoralizer!!!!
- The first time deployer is the big concern
- Many super ecstatic - what have been training for whole life
- First month - super busy - homesick
 - After first month routine
- After 4th or 5th month
 - “this stinks, I’m done”
- Marine Corps - culture of people who are Marines - want to deploy
 - “most Marines WANT to be there”
- When liaison officer to USN and USAF noticed more people didn’t want to be there compared to USMC
- Miss family like crazy - everyone does - different people respond to it differently
- “All about personalities”

Informational Interview Notes

Navy – Active Duty

Military Pilot Background

- Navy, 21 years; Squadron Commander
- F-14, F-18
- Deployments - 6 Cruises
- 1 Army Special Forces (4 months, Forward Air Controller)
- Current : Aviation Business Owner
Manages 8 Aircraft

Personal Background

- Age - Late 40's
- Marriage - 20 years
- Kids - 4 Kids – Ages 16, 13, 11, 9 - 1 boy, 3 girls

Biggest Challenges on Deployment

- Communication
 - Prior lack of Internet
 - Even now "Still just reading a letter"
- Need to set up spouse prior to take over all responsibilities
- Can't call right away from ship
- Navy wives, "Squadrons are close fit for a reason"
- "Raise the flag, and people just show up"
- "Everyone is a giver and a receiver"
- Kids Perspectives - Oldest two mainly remember
 - Was home for all 4 births
 - Never missed a Christmas
 - "Should have played the lottery"
 - Did miss just about every anniversary

Observations on Those who Struggled

- Naval Air Divorce Rate – 60%
 - Most time, not the cruise - bad marriage beforehand
 - Usually wife would stray, "not much to do on a ship"
- Very Rare - 10% - "Absence made the heart grow fonder"

Communication with Family while Deployed

- Talking - Pre Set Discussions
- Agenda set up ahead of time
- Business items first, then kids, then connect
 - "Ideal, doesn't always work out"
- "Always pray together at the end"
 - "By far, the primary faith connection"
- Got videos sent from church - would watch in room
 - Same with books put out by church
- "No new lingo, don't understand"
 - "Would feel distance if new way of thinking"

Faith - Biggest Prayer Requests

- Support of Family
- Protection of Safety
- "When people did not have anything else to ground life on...problems"
- "Lukewarm faith, not useful, not statistical difference"
- "Very well grounded ... helpful"

How to Maintain Faith Component in Family while Deployed

- "Disciplines in place prior
 - Church activity, support"
- "Trying to start right before will not work"
 - Needs to be in place prior
- "One of the most difficult parts of the deployment is the coming back"
 - "The wife says- I have it."
- "Commonality of purpose, commonality of intent"

Faith in Action while on a Cruise

- "Evangelism versus Command"
- "Holy Spirit's job to convict, inspire to lay a spiritual curiosity"
- "Not to have a megaphone - maybe 1 in 10 will come back but the overall result is that you look like a fanatic"
 - "Don't know where you are in their faith walk - 1st or 10th contact"

Informational Interview Notes
Navy – Active Duty & Reserve
(Interview Conducted via E-Mail Correspondence)

Military Pilot Background

- 8 years of Active duty, 14 years of Reserve flying and staff work,
- Current : 24 years with American Airlines flying both International and Domestic.

Personal Background

- By God's grace, I have been married for 32 years.
 - This relationship has spanned my years as a USNA Midshipman,

Spiritual Background

“I will start by sharing a little about my faith in Jesus and my faith journey thus far.

I became a follower of Jesus at 17 years old, having become convicted of my sin and need of a Savior through the reading of a New Testament Bible (Good News for Modern Man) given to me a few years earlier on the beach where I was surfing by one of those "Jesus freaks" of the 1960's. After reading the New Testament, especially the Gospel of John, I prayed to receive Jesus and asked what He wanted me to do next as I was without any direct fellowship at that time. I was immediately convicted to heal the relationship with my Father as well as to share my new found faith with both my parents and siblings. After many tearful discussions with them, I decided to focus on my dad, and commenced a personal "about face": I joined the Navy, as a way to "walk a mile" in my Dad's shoes. I personally resented his military service (it was, after all, the early 1970's in Southern California and I was a bohemian surfer and anti-establishment baby boomer) but God had changed my heart and my path and had given me the strength to walk with Him. My strained relationship with my Dad was slow to heal. I believe over the course of the next 21 years, my Dad found strength and victory in Jesus! The steps I tentatively took resulted in a Navy career for me and led me to my wife and calling as a military and commercial pilot.”

Observations on Those who Balanced It Well

- My approach to relational resilience with my wife and family is pretty simple.
 - As a pilot, I like "simple"!
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13 states that "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

- Equally important to an effective strategy of resilience is the verse right before it:
1 Corinthians 10:12 "So if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall."

A few things more thoughts.

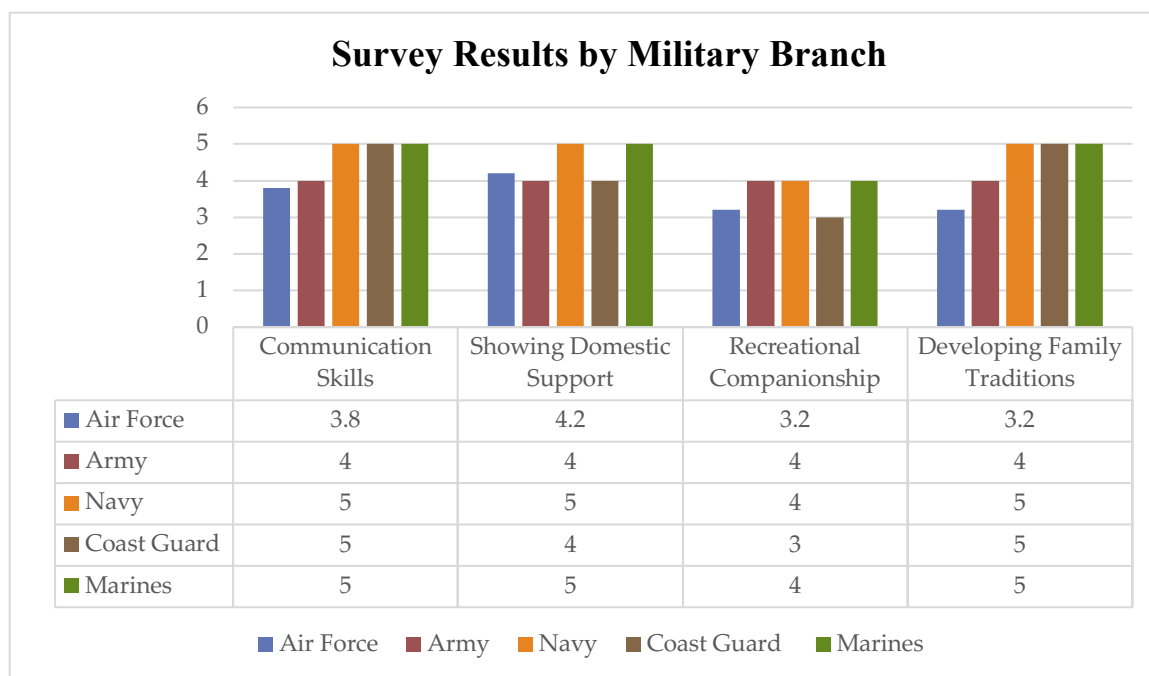
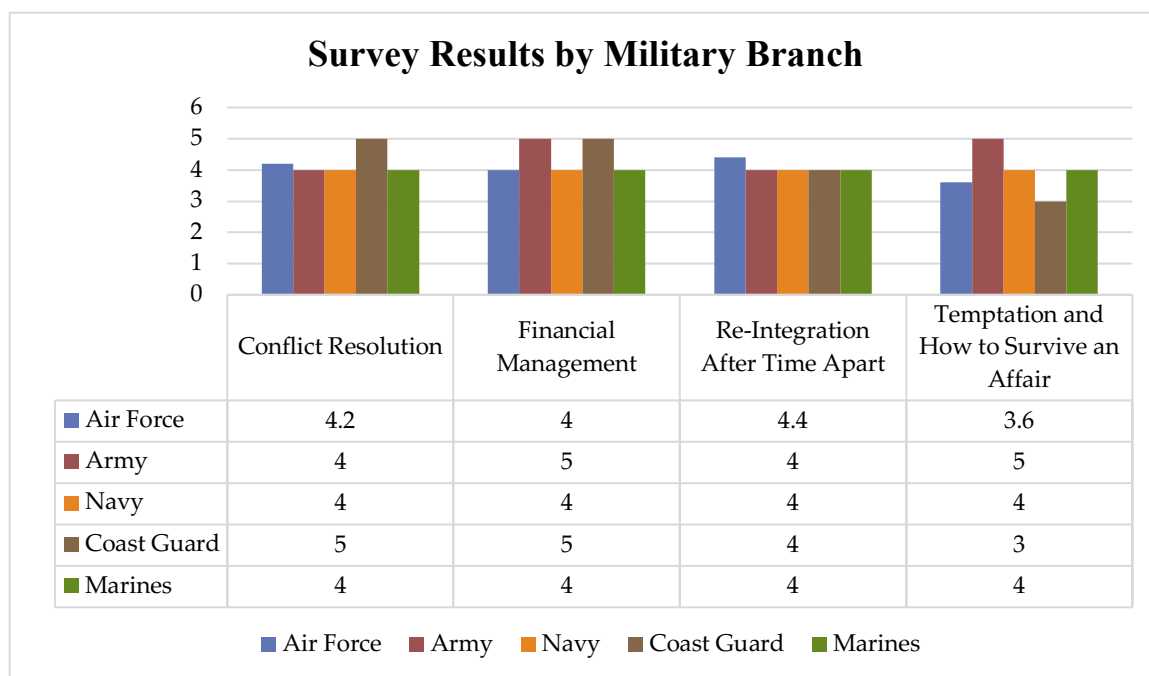
- 1. Every work situation, as in every marriage, is different depending on the personalities involved. My wife is a strong believer from a family with a multigenerational Christian heritage - praise God! We build each other up in the faith. This helps to remind me of my responsibility as an ambassador of Christ and empowers me in my role as husband and father.
- 2. Humility as a key component. My faith experience has convicted me of the relevancy of Ephesians 6:10-18, especially verse 12: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms". I absolutely cannot do this on my own power or through a clever strategy.
- 3. Prayer is a constant with me. I pray as I walk onto the plane or through the airport. I pray for my work relationships and my job performance that ultimately God would be glorified.

Relationship Resilience Survey

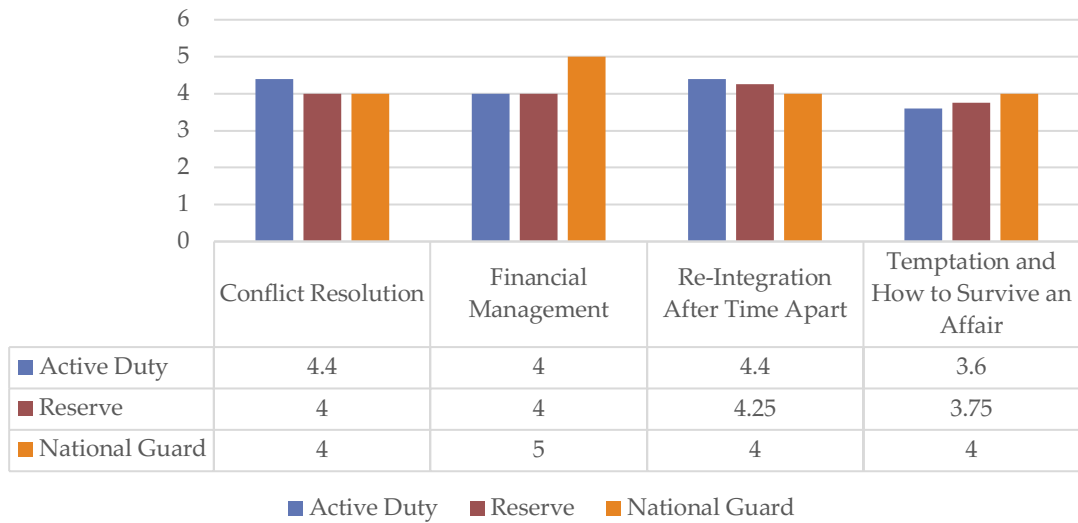
The relationship resiliency survey was a tool developed to gauge the perceived need for training in various skills. The survey was provided to 13 individuals spanning a broad range of military aviation backgrounds. The demographics of the sample population were as follows. The total time in military service (with some duplicates) was 9, 12, 17, 18, 22 and 23 years. For those individuals surveyed who served in the National Guard or Reserve, their times in those components of the total force were 3, 4, 9, 11 and 15 years. Although some individuals surveyed were still actively serving in the National Guard or Reserves, for those who had already retired or separated from military service, the time since the end of their military service was 7, 11, 18, 23 and 33 years. The range in ranks among these military pilots was from Warrant Officer through Lieutenant Colonel. The most successful aspect of the results of the survey was that it gathered information from military pilots of all branches of the military: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard. In addition, the survey gathered information from pilots who had served in each component of the total force to include active duty, Reserve and National Guard.

The results of the survey reveal these pilots' expressed value in various possible topics which were to be included in the FRG. As this data was collected quantitatively via Likert Scales, the results are presented in this chapter in graphical form. There are two sets of graphs by which the collected data can be viewed according to branch of service and component of the total force. The data collected is then provided in further detail through a presentation in the survey format. The answers to the open-ended "Why?" questions are also presented. This provides clarity as to the reasoning that the pilots have given for the selected scores.

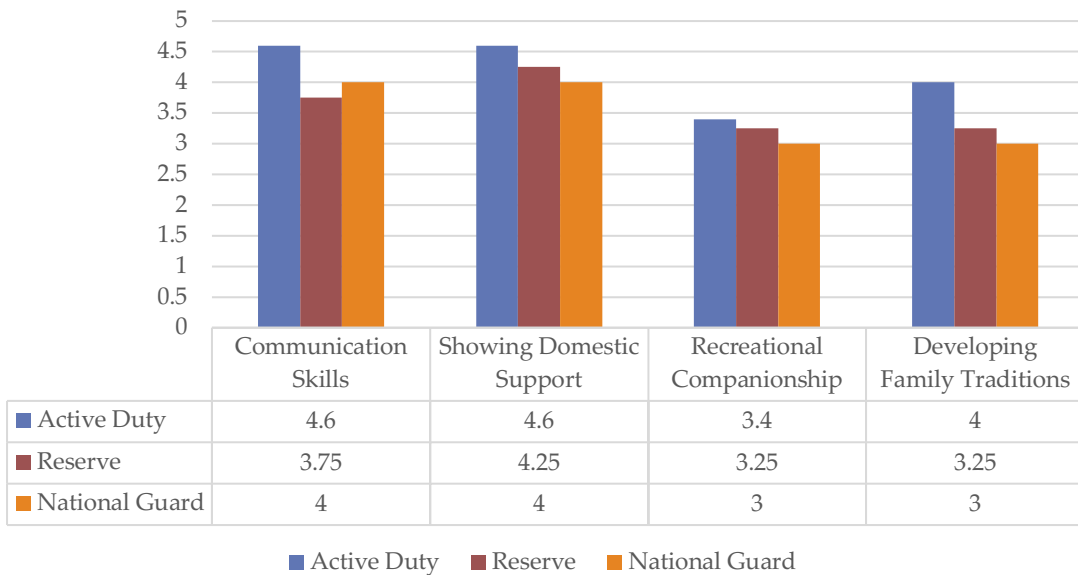
The numerical answers to the survey questions tend to be very similar with no more than a 1.5 out of 5 being the difference in score between members of the total force. This reveals that the felt need for the topics selected do not vary widely based on whether a person serves full time as a military pilot or bi-vocationally in addition to a separate civilian career. Variance in scores are most pronounced between the active duty versus Reserve and National Guard pilots. This can be accounted to cultural differences. The active duty military is a unique culture that requires unique ministry needs. It has its own support systems, rhythms of life, and challenges. Many military families face unique relationship challenges that many civilians do not face. Common challenges such as leadership stress and peer pressure are felt with greater intensity. Counter to this situation, those pilots who serve in the Reserve or National Guard live their lives in the civilian world. Although similar challenges remain, they tend to be softened due to the relative stability and social benefits of remaining rooted in one geographic location over a longer period of time. The results of this survey aided in shaping the final content of the FRG.



Survey Results by Total Force Component



Survey Results by Total Force Component



Relationship Resilience Survey

In order to assist in the completion of a doctoral thesis focusing on strengthening relationship resiliency among professional pilots, please complete the following survey. Each question begins with a measuring between 1-5 of how well you agree with the statement, 1 being totally disagree and 5 being totally agree. Next, you will have an opportunity to provide any comments on why you answered with that particular value.

Demographics:

Total time in the uniformed services? (years)

The total time in the uniformed services ranged from 9 years to 23 years.

How long as a member of the National Guard or Reserve? (years)

For those members of the National Guard or Reserve who were interviewed the length of time in these components ranged from 3 to 15 years.

If no longer actively serving, how long since separation or retirement?

The length of time since separation or retirement ranged from 7 to 33 years.

Branch?

Rank?

Each branch of military service was represented in the survey.

The ranks represented in the survey ranged from Warrant Officer to Lieutenant Colonel.

Length of time as a professional civilian pilot? (years)

The length of time as a professional pilot ranged from two to 35 years.

Type of civilian pilot? (Airline / Corporate / Fractional / Instructor / Other)

Each type of civilian aviation category was represented except fractional aviation.

Questions:

1. Service as a military pilot places significant strain on marriages and families.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“TDY Length and Volatile Schedule”

“A. Schedule uncertainty, B. Deployments, C. Physical danger to member,

D. Separation due to mil duty”

Time away / deployments”

“Deployment, Duty Days, call in to support pop up missions”

Note on front of survey : “I have & did live thru EVERY one of these situations”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 4.25

Reserve : 4.3

Guard : 5

2. A career as a civilian pilot places significant strain on marriages and families.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“Time away”

“Time away / schedules”

“24/7 on call schedule”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 3.5

Reserve : 4.3

Guard : 5

3. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Conflict Resolution*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“Lots of Passive Aggressive...Does Not Work”

“Given the nature of the flight deck it is critical to good calm”

“Given the potential for passenger situations...”

***“Family situations that occur due to the nature of time on the road &
separation”***

***“The work environment of professional pilots in any job puts stress on all
relationships.***

Response Average :

Active Duty : 4.4

Reserve : 4

Guard : 4

4. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Financial Management*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“Some need it others don’t – it seems to be an issue when marriages fail”

“Everyone needs better financial acumen, especially pilots”

“Financial management should be for all. Paycheck to paycheck. Long term retirement”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 4

Reserve : 4

Guard : 5

5. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Re-integration After Time Apart*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“This is more applicable to crews and personnel who deploy for extended periods”

“Some are good at this others are not”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 4.4

Reserve : 4.25

Guard : 4

6. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Temptation and How to Survive an Affair*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“Temptations while on the road”

“Not sure about this but some may fall victim to temptation”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 3.6

Reserve : 3.75

Guard : 4

7. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Communication Skills*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“These skills are essential to good CRM”

“Job requires communicating at all levels”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 4.6

Reserve : 3.75

Guard : 4

8. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Showing Domestic Support*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“Due to the travel, away & home cycle we often find it a challenge to fully integrate into routine daily life at home”

“Those who are married or other domestic situation could benefit from how to manage their relationships”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 4.6

Reserve : 4.25

Guard : 4

9. Professional pilots would benefit from training on developing *Recreational Companionship*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“We do that just fine...”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 3.4

Reserve : 3.25

Guard : 3

10. Professional pilots would benefit from training on *Developing Family Traditions*.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Totally Disagree | Disagree | Neither Disagree Nor Agree | Agree | Totally Agree |

Why?

“If the other critical issues are addressed healthy traditions will follow”

“Some probably have strong family history and have growth on those foundations. Others come from different types of home environments”

Response Average :

Active Duty : 4

Reserve : 3.25

Guard : 3

The Path Forward

If work on the FRG were to be started today as opposed to five years ago, it would be a website and not a guide. In the five years since beginning the Doctor of Ministry degree, a revolution has occurred in the aviation training industry which necessitates that current information be provided in digital formats. Technology has advanced so rapidly that in aviation training it is now rare to find printed materials. Almost all information is now provided via an app for an iPad. An electronic format is the path forward for the work which this thesis-project has begun.

Dr. James Emery White,² recently published an article on the need for ministries to adapt to the digital age. In his article he observes that, “the Internet is the venue in which the entire community you are trying to reach lives.” This has been my experience through the dissemination of the FRG. It has always been transferred electronically; never by print. At this time, I am e-mailing a PDF format of the document to those who request one. Moving to a dedicated electronic format for the FRG is a necessary step from the perspective of strategic ministry leadership. As Dr. White further wrote, “methods must be ruthlessly evaluated in light of missional effectiveness. This not only means asking if they are still “working,” but how well they are working. And perhaps most importantly, how their degree of effectiveness compares to the potential effectiveness of other possible investments. If a method is found wanting, or there is a better method to pursue, then no matter what that method is, no matter what the outside optics might be, no matter how much time and money and effort has been invested to that point, there can be no sacred cows.”

2. Dr. James Emery White is a ranked adjunct professor of theology and culture at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Previously, he served as the seminary’s fourth president.

In Dr. White's ministry context, he is folding the network of his mega-church's satellite campuses back into one centralized church congregation. The reason for this is to more effectively allocate available resources into the development of digital-based venues of ministry. "It's a digital world, and we dream of expanding our digital footprint, making our website so much more than it now is (particularly making it work seamlessly with mobile technology), using social media to reach out in unprecedented ways, staffing our Internet campus as if it were a physical campus, exploring the cutting-edge of physical engagement through "pop-up" events, and so much more."

In time, the format of the content of the information contained in the FRG will need to be altered yet again. When envisioning a later time when technological advances and ministry techniques will need to be examined yet again, Dr. White writes that, "we wouldn't be awkward or embarrassed about it. I would return to door-to-door visitation, Sunday School, revivals and a bus ministry if I felt they were most effective. Methods change; only the message, vision and values remain sacrosanct."³

I envision expanding the reach of this thesis-project through three venues; a dedicated website, a Facebook group page and a blog. Each of these venues are easily cultivated through internet based aids and require little to no financial resources to maintain. Further, I plan to expand the breadth of the FRG. Feedback has been given on the desire to include a section on financial management. I also envision what I would view as a second volume to the current work which would be dedicated especially to child-rearing as a military pilot.

3. James Emery White, "Why We're Ending Our Multi-Site Approach," 27 May 2019, churchandculture.org, Web, 29 May 2019.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill told the British people following their victory at the Battle of El Alamein that, “Now this is not the end. This is not even the beginning of the end. But, it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.” This thesis-project is not the end for me. The work of ministering to military pilots is not just a project for me, it is my passion. It is my sincere prayer that the Lord continues to use the work of this thesis-project for His glory and to choose to use me, through it, as His man in aviation.

APPENDIX

FAMILY RESILIENCY GUIDE

CAVU – Ceiling and Visibility Unlimited

A Guide to Family Resiliency for Military Pilots



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How Love Works

A Spouse's View of the Life of a Pilot

A Spouse's View

"My husband (she says) is a typical pilot. He's an overgrown kid. His planes are the toys he plays with. When you live with a pilot, that's something you get used to. It's the curse of these guys – but it's what keeps up their energy levels."

"Life with a pilot is one of feast versus famine. They're either off somewhere flying, or else around causing trouble for you. It's like living with a retiree. You think, Why

doesn't he get out of here? Then suddenly, he's gone, and you say, "When is he coming home again?"

"Unlike those women who depend on their husbands ('Could you talk to our lawyer' 'Could you spank our son this evening?'), the wife of a pilot has to learn self-sufficiency. When a problem comes up, she has to handle it like a single woman. The joke in our family is that my husband is, 'The Phantom.'"



"I feel that we are on the brink of an area of expansion of knowledge about ourselves and our surroundings that is beyond description or comprehension at this time... Our efforts today and what we've done so far are but small building blocks on a very huge pyramid to come... Knowledge begets knowledge. The more I see, the more impressed I am not with how much we know but with how tremendous the areas are that are as yet unexplored."

~ U.S. Marine Corps Lt Col John H. Glenn, Jr., addressing a joint session of Congress six days after orbiting the earth three times in a Mercury space capsule, Friendship 7

Some of our friends think that our children are fatherless. Even my mother says she suspects I just rented him. She says I paid him five dollars to say 'I do' at the wedding ceremony.

"The thing about my husband is that his moods are so cyclical. He'll appear at the door. I haven't seen him for weeks now. Suddenly he's home, and it's like being on a honeymoon. We'll spend hours in bed. We'll spend

days catching up with each other.

"But then, after a while, I start noticing the symptoms. I'll look at my cupboard. All my cans have become alphabetized. When I open the freezer, all the fruit juice is color coded. I watch him get antsy. I can see the time weighing on him

"Then off he goes again – and I'm left with PTA meetings. I shortcut the

laundry. I cheat on my kitchen duty. During the days he was home we had pot roasts and veal dishes. Now the children and I will have Dominoe's Pizza. It's a crazy kind of life, but it's the life that I'm used to. It's the life our friends lead. And as for thunderstorms and microbursts and takeoff crashes, I'm used to those worries. Over the years, I've become hardened to them."

How Love Works

The Chemistry of Love

The Chemistry of Love

According to Helen Fisher, a researcher at Rutgers University, chemistry and love are inextricable. She's not speaking, though, of the "chemistry" that makes two people compatible. Instead, she's speaking of the chemicals that are released into our bodies as we experience lust, attraction, and attachment. We may think that we're using our heads to govern our hearts, but in fact (at least to a degree) we're simply responding to the chemicals that help us experience pleasure, excitement, and arousal.

The Chemicals in Each Stage of Love

According to Dr. Fisher, there are three stages of love, and each is driven to a degree by chemicals. There is a lot of chemistry involved in feeling attachment, sweaty palms, butterflies in your stomach, etc. Here's a look at some of the key biochemical players:

Stage 1 : Lust

If you're feeling eager for a sexual encounter with someone, chances are you're reacting to the sex hormones testosterone and estrogen. Both of these hormones play an important role in increasing libido in both men and women.

Testosterone and estrogen are generated as a result of messages from the hypothalamus of the brain. Testosterone is a very potent aphrodisiac. Estrogen can make women more interested in sex around the time they ovulate (when estrogen levels are at their peak).

Stage 2 : Attraction

Lust is fun, but it may or may not lead to real romance. If you do make it to stage 2 in your relationship, though, chemicals become increasingly important. On the one hand, chemicals associated with attraction can



The First Balloon Fliers

In June 1783, the Montgolfier brothers conducted the first public display of a hot-air balloon, and the following November Francois Pilatre de Rozier and the Marquis d'Alondes made the first manned ascent.

Early French aeronauts achieved some spectacular flights. In February 1784, Jean-Pierre Blanchard soared over 12,500 feet in a hydrogen balloon.

make you feel dreamy. On the other hand, they can make you feel anxious or obsessive. People who are in this early phase of “falling in love” may even sleep less or lose their appetite!

Phenylethylamine or PEA – This is a chemical that naturally occurs in the brain and is also found in some foods, such as chocolate. It is a stimulant, much like an amphetamine, that causes the release of norepinephrine and dopamine. This chemical is released when you are falling in love. It’s responsible for the head-over-heels, elated part of love.

Norepinephrine – When PEA causes this chemical to be released, you feel the effects

in the form of sweaty palms and a pounding heart.

Dopamine – Dopamine is a neurochemical that appears to be associated with mate selection. An Emory University study found that voles (a type of rodent) chose their mate based on dopamine release. When female voles were injected with dopamine in the presence of a male vole, they could select him from a group of voles later.

Stage 3 : Attachment

Now that you’re really committed to someone else, chemicals help you stay connected.

Oxytocin – Dopamine trigger the release of oxytocin, which is sometimes called the

“cuddle hormone.” In both genders, oxytocin is released during touching. In women, oxytocin is released during labor and breastfeeding.

Serotonin – A chemical that is more prevalent among people with compulsive disorders, serotonin can increase our dependence on another person.

Endorphins – Your brain acquires a tolerance to the love stimulants and starts to release endorphins. The honeymoon is over, chemically, around 18 months to four years into a relationship. However, this isn’t all bad. Endorphins are associated with feelings of attachment and comfort. Endorphins are like opiates. They calm anxiety, relieve pain and reduce stress

How Love Works

The Stress of Life

Why do some people hurt more than others? What may seem to be a stress of life to one person may be a traumatic experience to another. Each person has strengths and weaknesses and respond to different stressors of life in different extremes. What is the cause of these differences and what can be done to mitigate them?

Inborn Resilience

Some people seem to be born with an ability to endure hardship. There is some indication that this resilience follows family lines, so it may be genetic or imparted in childhood.

Previous Exposure

This can work both ways. If a person has gone through major crisis before – for instance, the battle-hardened vet – he may be strengthened to deal with the current crisis.

However, the previous struggles may have worn the person down so the fatigue factor comes into play. The person may cry “I’ve had enough. I can’t take anymore!” This is especially true if there’s something unique or surprising about the current stressor. It may find a “chink in the armor” of the most hardened person.

Point in Individual Development

Each of us is in a certain trajectory of growth. We are learning things, assimilating things we’ve learned, or questioning things. A stressful crisis can push us further along or knock us back; it depends where we are.

Preexisting Problems

Trauma is a magnifying glass. It will magnify your problems, find your weakest point, and make it weaker.



Otto Lilienthal

Father of Aeronautics

Lost his life in the pursuit of manned flight

Social Supports

Friends and family can help or hurt, but it goes beyond this. Where do you go when you need help? If you have a network of friends you can rely on, great. If you have a church or synagogue or social group that can offer assistance, wonderful. If you have a trusted counselor, use him or her. Those without such social supports can be wrecked by trauma.



Otto Lilienthal

Otto Lilienthal was a father of aeronautics. He cracked the code that the shape of a wing could generate lift and make manned flight possible. However, the technology of his time limited his ability to generate propulsion. So, he would go to the hills about two hours north of Berlin and jump. He logged 5 hours of flight time over the span of 5 years by doing this..

He was able to crack the code of lift but not stability or control. One day, he lost control and fell 50 feet to his eventual death. (August 9, 1896)

He died never knowing the full impact of his life ...

What Lilienthal never knew is that soon after, thousands of miles away, a young man was struck by the dreaded disease Typhoid. For days he lay in a delirium, close to death, his fever was 105 degrees. He had a Brother who read to him - read the story of Lilienthal - and this reading about Lilienthal sparked his imagination.

One day this older brother wrote one of the most important letters in history. He wrote to the Smithsonian Institution asking for all available information on the topic of manned flight. The man's name was Wilbur Wright and his brother was Orville.

If we reach out to those under stress - to be the social support that they need at that time - we will serve them in a way that we many never comprehend.

We may never know the full impact that we can have on their life...

How Love Works

When "Love" Fades ... Real Love Can Begin

Once the experience of falling in love has run its natural course. (remember, the average in-love experience only lasts two years) we will return to the world of reality and begin to assert ourselves. He will express his desires, but his desires will be different from hers. He wants sex, she is too tired. He dreams of buying a new car, but she says, "we can't afford it." She would like to visit her parents, but he says, "I don't like spending so much time with your family." Little by little, the illusion of intimacy evaporates, and the individual desires, emotions, thoughts, and behavior patterns assert themselves. They are two individuals.

The Need

The "in love" experience temporarily meets that need, but it is inevitably a quick fix and has a limited and predictable life span. After we come down from

the high of the "in love" obsession, the emotional need for love resurfaces because it is fundamental to our nature.

The Options

Some couples believe that the end of the in-love experience means they have only two options: resign themselves to a life of misery with their spouse or jump ship and try again.

The Choice

Research seems to indicate that there is a third and better alternative: We can recognize the in-love experience for what it was – a temporary emotional high – and now pursue "real love" with our spouse. That kind of love is emotional in nature but not obsessional. It is a love that unites reason and emotion. It involves an act of the will and requires discipline, and it recognizes the need for personal growth.

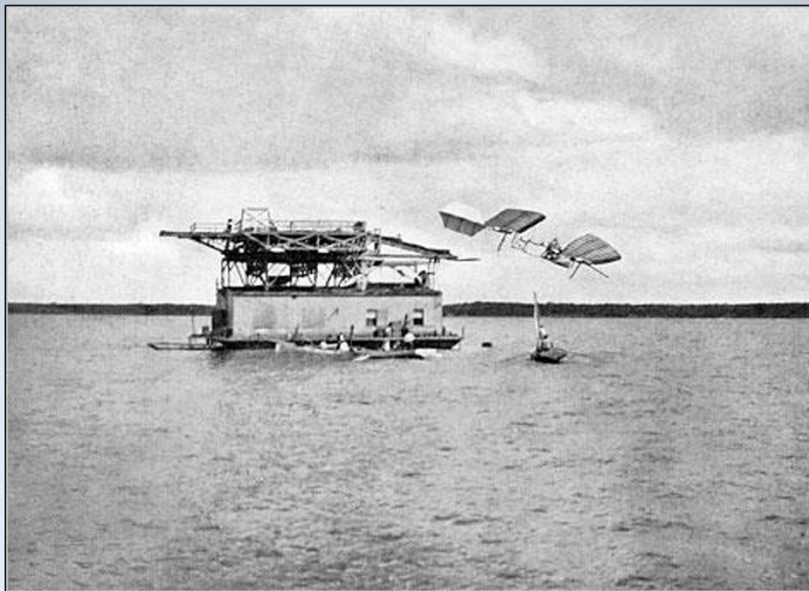


Samuel Langley's
AeroDrome A

ALMOST the World's
First Airplane

The Effort

That kind of love requires effort and discipline. It is the choice to expend energy in an effort to benefit the other person, knowing that if his or her life is enriched by your effort, you too will find a sense of satisfaction – the satisfaction of having genuinely loved another. It does not require the euphoria of the in-love experience. In fact, true love cannot begin until the in-love experience has run its course.



Samuel Langley's Flight Test, Potomac River

Back in the day, if you were looking to wager some serious money on who would invent the first airplane, you would have been a fool not to bet on Samuel Langley and this airplane. Langley was the head of the Smithsonian institution, had the personal backing of the US President and a grant from the US government worth over one million dollars.

He did build an airplane and after his second test flight failed,

HE JUST QUIT!

11 Years later, in 1914, Glenn Curtiss, the famous aviation pioneer, rebuilt the Langley Aerodrome A and conducted further flight tests.

With modifications and improvements, Glenn Curtiss was able to get the Aerodrome A to fly. Today, Samuel Langley is little more than a footnote in the history books.

Had he reached out, sought more help from others and NOT QUIT who knows how he would be remembered today?

How Love Works

How to Begin to Fight for Your Marriage

How to Begin to Fight for Your Marriage

If your marriage is in serious trouble, you need to begin by making a strong commitment of the will to undertake the following experiment. You risk further pain and rejection, but you also stand to regain a healthy and fulfilling marriage. Count the cost: it's worth the attempt.

1. Ask how you can be a better spouse, and regardless of the other's attitude, act on what he or she tells you. Continue to both seek more input and comply with those wishes with all your heart and will. Assure your spouse that your motives are pure.
2. When you receive positive feedback you know there is progress. Each month make one non-threatening but specific request that is easy for your spouse.

Make sure it relates to your primary love language and will help replenish your empty tank.

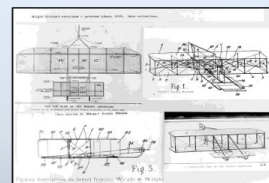
3. When your spouse responds and meets your need, you will be able to react with not only your will but your emotions as well. Without overreacting, continue positive feedback and affirmation of your spouse at these times.
4. As your marriage begins to truly heal and grow deeper, make sure you don't "rest on your laurels" and forget your spouse's love language and daily needs. You're on the road to your dreams, so stay there! Put appointments into your schedule to assess together how you're doing.



Total Useful Life of the Wright Flyer

**1 Day
4 Flights
1,347 Feet**

***It never flew
again.***



The Final Flight of the Wright Flyer



Distant view of the Wright Flyer just after landing, taken from the starting point, with wing-rest in center of picture and launching rail at right.

Taking turns, the Wrights made four brief, low-altitude flights on that one and only day that the Wright Flyer ever took to the sky. The flight paths were all essentially straight; turns were not attempted. Each flight ended in a bumpy and unintended "landing."

The last flight, by Wilbur, was 852 feet in 59 seconds, much longer than each of the three previous flights of 120, 175 and 200 feet. The landing broke the front elevator supports, which the Wrights hoped to repair for a possible four-mile flight to Kitty Hawk village.

Soon after, a heavy gust picked up the Wright Flyer and tumbled it end over end, damaging it beyond any hope of a quick repair. It was never flown again.

Yet, that one day inspired the world. 66 years later, when the first spacecraft landed on the moon, it carried onboard a piece of the Wright Flyer.

Fight for your marriage! You may inspire the world around you.



The 5 Love Languages

Learning to Broadcast on the Correct Frequency

Your emotional love language and the language of your spouse may be as different as Chinese is from English. No matter how hard you try to express love in English, if your spouse understands only Chinese, you will never understand how to love each other.

Seldom do a husband and wife have the same primary emotional love language. We tend to speak our primary love language, and we become confused when our spouse does not understand what we are communicating. We are expressing our love, but the message does not come through because we are speaking what, to them, is a foreign language. Therein lies the fundamental problem, and there is a solution.

Being sincere is not enough. We must be willing to learn our spouse's primary love language if we are to be effective communicators of love.

Discovering the primary love language of your spouse is essential if you are to maintain an emotionally healthy and fulfilling relationship.

What are the 5 Love Languages?

Relationship experts describe five love languages

1. Words of Affirmation
2. Quality Time
3. Receiving Gifts
4. Acts of Service
5. Physical Touch

Some individuals will know instantly their own primary love language and that of their spouse. For others, it will not be that easy.

How to Learn to Speak Love Languages

What is your primary love language? What makes you feel most loved by your spouse? What do you desire above all else? If the answer does not leap into your mind, these are some observations that may help you:

What does your spouse do or fail to do that hurts you most deeply? The opposite of what hurts you most is probably your love language

What have you most often requested of your spouse? The thing you have most often requested is likely the thing that would make you feel most loved.

In what way do you regularly express love to your spouse? Your method of expressing love may be an indication that that would also make you feel loved.

HOW TO SPEAK YOUR SPOUSE'S LOVE LANGUAGE { }

| WHICH LOVE LANGUAGE? | HOW TO COMMUNICATE | ACTIONS TO TAKE | THINGS TO AVOID |
|--|--|--|---|
|  WORDS OF AFFIRMATION | Encourage, affirm, appreciate, empathize. Listen actively. | Send an unexpected note, text, or card. Encourage genuinely and often. | Non-constructive criticism, not recognizing or appreciating effort. |
|  PHYSICAL TOUCH | Non-verbal - use body language and touch to emphasize love. | Hug, kiss, hold hands, show physical affection regularly. Make intimacy a thoughtful priority. | Physical neglect, long stints without intimacy, receiving affection coldly. |
|  RECEIVING GIFTS | Thoughtfulness, make your spouse a priority, speak purposefully. | Give thoughtful gifts and gestures. Small things matter in a big way. Express gratitude when receiving a gift. | Forgetting special occasions, unenthusiastic gift receiving. |
|  QUALITY TIME | Uninterrupted and focused conversations. One-on-one time is critical. | Create special moments together, take walks and do small things with your spouse. Weekend getaways are huge. | Distractions when spending time together. Long stints without one-on-one time. |
|  ACTS OF SERVICE | Use action phrases like "I'll help...". They want to know you're with them, partnered with them. | Do chores together or make them breakfast in bed. Go out of your way to help alleviate their daily workload. | Making the requests of others a higher priority, lacking follow-through on tasks big and small. |

GRAPHIC BY FIERCEMARRIAGE.COM
 BASED ON "THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES", A BOOK BY DR. GARY CHAPMAN



Helios Airways Boeing 737

On August 14, 2005, this exact plane crashed killing 121 people in a 100% preventable accident because of a breakdown in language. The Captain was from Germany and the First Officer was from Cyprus. They both had passed the ICAO Level 4 English language test, meaning that they could speak English to each other but only basic aviation terms and checklists.

Maintenance workers had left the plane's pressurization in the manual mode, they missed it on their checklist and climbed to altitude. When warning indications went off, the situation required thinking and speaking outside the box. Basically, they couldn't do it. They both passed out due to loss of oxygen, the plane flew on autopilot for 3 more hours, and ran out of fuel. All preventable, if they could have spoken each others' language.

The same thing can happen in our relationships at home and even at work. We all speak what psychologists call a "love language." We all receive and give praise, appreciation and thanks using different ways. There are 5 common ways: Words of Affirmation; Physical Touch; Receiving Gifts; Quality Time; Acts of Service.

If you aren't speaking another person's language – you can yell as loud as you want – they aren't hearing you. In the same way, if they aren't speaking your language – you aren't hearing them. So, I would encourage you, for those people who are closest to you, learn their language.

It may prevent a disaster someday.

The 5 Love Languages

Acts of Service

ACTS OF SERVICE

Acts of service simply means doing things without being prompted that you know that your spouse would like you to do. You seek to please her by serving her, to express your love for her by doing things for her. Such actions as cooking a meal, setting a table, washing dishes, vacuuming, cleaning a toilet, changing the baby's diaper, dusting the bookcase, trimming the shrubs, walking the dog,

changing the cat's litter box, and dealing with landlords and insurance companies are all acts of service. They require thought, planning, time, effort, and energy. If done with a positive spirit, they are indeed expressions of love.

Learning the love language of acts of service will require some of us to reexamine our stereotypes of the roles of husbands and wives. These are changing but models from our past can linger. Many

of us, by unconscious default, follow the patterns of our mother and father. Whatever your perceptions, chances are your spouse perceives marital roles somewhat differently than you do. A willingness to examine and change stereotypes is necessary in order to express love more effectively. Remember, there are no rewards for maintaining stereotypes but there are tremendous benefits to meeting the emotional needs of your spouse.



A wise man once said,
*"If anyone wants to be First, he must be the very last,
and the servant of all."*

IF YOUR SPOUSE'S LOVE LANGUAGE IS ACTS OF SERVICE:

1. Make a list of all the requests your spouse has made of you over the past few weeks. Select one of these each week and do it as an expression of love.
2. Print note cards with the following:
"Today I will show my love for you by..." Complete the sentence with one of the following: picking up the clutter, paying the bills, fixing something that's been broken a long time, weeding the garden. (Bonus points if it's a chore that's been put off.)
3. Give your spouse a love note accompanied by the act of service every three days for a month.
4. Ask your spouse to make a list of ten things he or she would like for you to do during the next month. Then ask your spouse to prioritize those by numbering them 1-10, with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important. Use this list to plan your strategy for a month of love. (Get ready to live with a happy spouse)
5. While your spouse is away, get the children to help you with some act of service for him. When he walks in the door, join the children in shouting "Surprise! We love you!" Then share your act of service.
6. What one act of service has your spouse nagged about consistently? Why not decide to see the nag as a tag? Your spouse is tagging this as really important to him or her. If you choose to do it as an expression of love, it is worth more than a thousand roses.
7. If your requests to your mate come across as nags or put-downs, try writing them in words that would be less offensive to them. Share this revised wording with your spouse. For example, "The yard always looks so nice, and I really appreciate your work. I'd love to thank you in advance for mowing the lawn this week before Julie and Ben come over for dinner." Your husband might respond: "Where's the lawn mower, I can't wait!" Try it and see.
8. Perform a major act of service like organizing the home office, and then post a sign that reads, "To (spouse's name) with love," and sign your name.
9. If you have more money than time, hire someone to do the acts of service that you know your spouse would like for you to do, such as the yard work or a once-a-month deep cleaning of your home.
10. Ask your spouse to tell you the daily acts of service that would really speak love to him or her. Seek to work these into your daily schedule. "Little things" really do mean a lot.



During the American Revolution, a noncommissioned officer was directing the repairs of a military building. He was barking orders to the soldiers under his direction, trying to get them to raise a heavy wooden beam.

As the men struggled in vain to lift the beam into place, a man who was passing by stopped to ask the one in charge why he wasn't helping the men. With all the pomp of an emperor, the soldier replied, "Sir, I am a corporal!"

"You are, are you?" replied the passerby, "I was not aware of that." Then, taking off his hat and bowing, he said, "I beg your pardon, Corporal." Then the stranger walked over and strained with the soldiers to lift the heavy beam. After the job was finished, he turned and said, "Mr. Corporal, when you have another such job, and have not enough men, send for your Commander-in-Chief, and I will come and help you a second time."

The corporal was thunderstruck.
The man's name was General George Washington.

We all want to be honored, respected and appreciated. So badly, sometimes, that we try to demand it; from our wife, our husband, our kids or our co-workers. The fact is that these things cannot be demanded or even requested. True honor, respect and appreciation only come one way. When we become servants.

A wise man once said, "If anyone wants to be First, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." (Mark 9:35)

The 5 Love Languages

Physical Touch

Physical Touch

We have long known that physical touch is a way of communicating emotional love. Numerous research projects in the area of child development have reached this conclusion: babies who are held, hugged, and kissed develop a healthier emotional life than those who are left for long periods of time without physical contact.

Physical touch is also a powerful vehicle for communicating marital love. Holding hands, kissing, embracing, and sexual intercourse are all ways of communicating emotional love to one's spouse. For some individuals, physical touch is their primary love language. Without it, they feel unloved. With it, they feel secure in the love of their spouse.

Your Best Instructor

Within marriage, what is appropriate and inappropriate touching is

determined by the couple themselves, within certain broad guidelines.

Your best instructor is your spouse, of course. After all, she is the one you are seeking to love. She knows best what she perceives as a loving touch. Don't insist on touching her in your way and in your time. Learn to speak her love dialect. Your spouse may find some touches uncomfortable or irritating. To insist on continuing these touches is to communicate the opposite of love.

Large and Small

Love touches may be explicit and demand full attention such as in a back rub or sexual foreplay, culminating in intercourse. On the other hand, love touches may be implicit and require only a moment, such as putting your hand on his shoulder as you pour

Almost instinctively in a time of crisis, we hug one another. Why? Because physical touch is a powerful communicator of love.

a cup of coffee or rubbing your body against him as you pass in the kitchen. Explicit love touches obviously take more time, not only in actual touching but in developing your understand of how to communicate love to your spouse this way. If a back massage communicates love loudly to your spouse, then the time, money, and energy you spend in learning to be a good masseur or masseuse will be well invested. If sexual intercourse is your mate's primary dialect, reading about and discussing the art of sexual lovemaking will enhance your expression of love.

IF YOUR SPOUSE'S LOVE LANGUAGE IS PHYSICAL TOUCH:

1. As you walk from the car to go shopping, reach out and hold your spouse's hand.
2. While eating together, let your knee or foot drift over and touch your spouse.
3. Walk up to your spouse and say, "Have I told you lately that I love you?" Take her in your arms and hug her while you rub her back and continue. "You are the greatest!" (Resist the temptation to rush to the bedroom.) Untangle yourself and move on to the next thing.
4. While your spouse is seated, walk up behind her and give her a shoulder massage.
5. When you sit together in church, when the minister calls for prayer, reach over and hold your spouse's hand.
6. Initiate sex by giving your spouse a foot massage. Continue to other parts of the body as long as it brings pleasure to your spouse.
7. When family and friends are visiting, touch your spouse in their presence. Putting your arm around him as you stand talking, or simply placing your hand on her shoulder says, "Even with all these people in our house, I still see you."
8. When your spouse arrives at home, meet him or her one step earlier than usual and give your mate a big welcome home. The point is to vary the routine and enhance even a small "touching experience."



St. Elmo's Fire

As the airplane moves through the air, friction – physical touch - with rain, snow, ice crystals, dust particles, and the air itself can cause a build up of static electricity. This charge can not only affect radio reception and navigation instruments but it also may cause displays of St Elmo's Fire, which can look like miniature lightening bolts dancing from wingtips, antennas, and propellers.

For the person whose love language is physical touch, learning to speak their language well and often can have the same effect – creating electricity in your marriage!

The 5 Love Languages

Quality Time

QUALITY TIME

Quality time is giving someone your undivided attention. It does not mean sitting on the couch watching TV together. When you spend time that way it is the screen that has your attention – not your spouse. The key is to have the screen off, looking at each other and talking, giving each other your undivided attention. It means taking a walk, just the two of you, or going out to eat and looking at each other and talking. Have you ever noticed that in a restaurant, you can almost always tell the difference between a dating and a married couple? Dating couples look at each other and talk. Married couples sit there and gaze around the restaurant. You'd think that they went there to eat!

When you give your loved one twenty minutes of undivided attention and

they do the same for you, you are giving each other twenty minutes of life. You will never have those twenty minutes again; you are giving your lives to each other. It is a powerful emotional communicator of love.

FOCUSED ATTENTION

It isn't enough to just be in the same room with someone. A key ingredient in giving your spouse quality time is giving them focused attention, especially in this era of many distractions. When a father is sitting on the floor, rolling a ball to his two-year-old, his attention is not focused on the ball but on his child. For that brief moment, however long it lasts, they are together. If, however, the father is talking on the phone while he rolls the ball, his attention is diluted.

Quality time does not mean we have to spend our

Spending quality time with your family does not have to diminish your vocational goals. It just means that when you get to the top, they will be there with you.

together moments gazing into each other's eyes. It means that we are doing something together and that we are giving our full attention to the other person. The activity in which we are engaged is incidental. The important thing emotionally is that we are spending focused time with each other. The activity is a vehicle that creates the sense of togetherness. The important thing about the father rolling the ball to the two-year-old is not the activity itself, but the emotions that are created between the father and the child.

How to Have Quality Conversation

Like words of affirmation, the language of quality time also has many dialects. One of the most common dialects is that of quality conversation. Quality conversation is sympathetic dialogue where two individuals are sharing their experiences, thoughts, feelings, and desires in a friendly, uninterrupted context. Most individuals who complain that their spouse does not talk do not mean literally that he or she never says a word. They mean that he or she seldom takes part in sympathetic dialogue. If your spouse's primary love language is quality time, such dialogue is crucial to his or her emotional sense of being loved.

Quality Activities

Quality activities may include anything in which one or both of you has an interest. The emphasis is not on what you are doing but on why you are doing it. The purpose is to experience something together, to walk away from it feeling, "He cares about me. He was willing to do something with me that I enjoy, and he did it with a positive attitude." That is love, and for some people it is love's loudest voice.

One of the by-products of quality time is that they provide a memory bank from which to draw in the years ahead. Those are the memories of love, especially for the person whose primary love language is quality time.

Where Do You Find the Time?

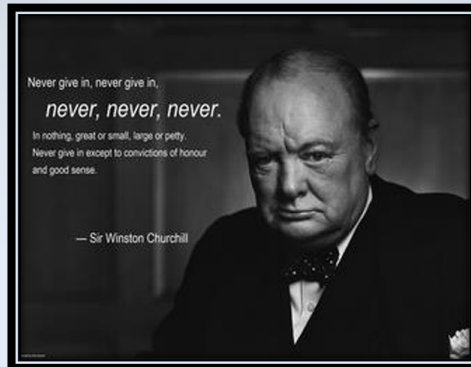
Where do we find time for such activities, especially if both of you have vocations outside of the home? You make time just as you make time for lunch or dinner. Why? Because it is just as essential to your marriage as meals are to your health. Is it difficult? Does it take careful planning? Yes. Does it mean we have to give up some individual activities? Perhaps. Does it mean we do some things we don't particularly enjoy? Certainly. Is it worth it? Without a doubt. What's in it for you? The pleasure of living with a spouse who feels loved and knowing that you have learned to speak his or her love language fluently.

IF YOUR SPOUSE'S LOVE LANGUAGE IS QUALITY TIME:

1. Take a walk together through the old neighborhood where one of you grew up. Ask questions about your spouse's childhood. Ask, "What are the fun memories of your childhood?" Then, "What was most painful about your childhood?"
2. Go to the city park and rent bicycles. Ride until you are tired, then sit and watch the ducks. When you get tired of the quacks, roll on to the rose garden. Learn each other's favorite color of rose and why.
3. Ask your spouse for a list of five activities that he would enjoy doing with you. Make plans to do one of them each month for the next five months. If money is a problem, space the freebies between the "we can't afford this" events.
4. Ask your spouse where she most enjoys sitting when talking with you. The next week, text her one afternoon and say, "I want to make a date with you one evening this week to sit on the porch and talk. Which night and what time would be best for you?"
5. Think of an activity your spouse enjoys, but which brings little pleasure to you: NASCAR, browsing in flea markets, working out. Tell your spouse that you are trying to broaden your horizons and would like to join him in this activity sometime this month. Set a date and give it your best effort.
6. Plan a weekend getaway just for the two of you sometime within the next six months. Be sure it is a weekend when you won't have to call the office or have a commitment with your kids. Focus on relaxing together doing what one or both of you enjoy.
7. Make time every day to share with each other some of the events of the day. When you spend more time on Facebook than you do listening to each other, you can end up more concerned about your hundred "friends" than about your spouse.
8. Have a "Let's review our history" evening once every three months. Set aside an hour to focus on your history. Select five questions each of you will answer, such as:
 - a. Who was your best and worst teacher in school and why?
 - b. When did you feel your parents were proud of you?
 - c. What is the worst mistake that your mother ever made?
 - d. What is the worst mistake that your father ever made?
 - e. What do you remember about the religious aspect of your childhood?

Each evening, agree on your five questions before you begin your sharing. At the end of the five questions, stop and decide on the five questions that you will ask next time.

9. Camp out in the living room. Spread your blankets and pillows on the floor. Get your Pepsi and popcorn. Pretend the TV is broken and talk like you used to when you were dating. Talk till the sun comes up or something else happens. If the floor gets too hard, go back upstairs and go to bed. You won't forget this evening!



Winston Churchill

If we want to be truly effective as leaders in our home and in all areas of our lives we must be radically committed.

People buy into the leader first and then the vision. Many of us are in our peak career building, child rearing years – we will never be as busy in life as we are in this season...and we have to make choices about our commitments.

The challenge is to always remember to make our commitments to those things which are *truly* important; to family, to friends, to faith.

In 1941, after the vastly outnumbered pilots of the Royal Air Force had stopped Hitler at the Battle of Britain, Churchill famously said:

“Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty—never give in, except to convictions of honour and good sense.”

The 5 Love Languages

Receiving Gifts

Receiving Gifts

In every culture, gift giving is a part of the love-marriage process. Gifts are visual symbols of love. Most wedding ceremonies in America include the giving and receiving of rings. The person performing the ceremony says, "These rings are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual bond that unites your two hearts in a way that has no end." That is not meaningless rhetoric. It is verbalizing a significant truth – symbols have emotional value. Perhaps that is even more graphically displayed near the end of a disintegrating marriage when the husband or wife stops wearing the wedding ring. It is a visual sign that the marriage is in serious trouble.

Price Doesn't Matter

Gifts come in all sizes, colors, and shapes. Some are expensive, and other are free. To the individual whose primary love

whose primary language is receiving gifts, the cost of the gift will matter little, unless it is greatly out of line with what you can afford. If a millionaire only gives one-dollar gifts regularly, the spouse may question whether that is an expression of love, but when family finances are limited, a one-dollar gift may speak a million dollars' worth of love.

Getting Creative

Gifts may be purchased, found, or made. The husband who finds an interesting bird feather while out jogging and brings it home to his wife has found himself an expression of love, unless, of course, his wife is allergic to feathers. For the man who can afford it, you can purchase a beautiful card for less than five dollars. For the man who cannot, you can make one for free. Write "I love you," and sign your name. Gifts need not be expensive.

A Great Investment!

If you are a spender, you will have little difficulty purchasing gifts for your spouse; but if you are a saver, you will experience emotional resistance to the idea of spending money as an expression of love. You don't purchase things for yourself; why should you purchase things for your spouse? But that attitude fails to recognize that you are purchasing things for yourself! By saving and investing money you are purchasing self-worth and emotional security. You are caring for your own emotional needs in the way you handle money. What you are not doing is meeting the emotional needs of your spouse. If you discover that your spouse's primary love language is receiving gifts, then perhaps you will understand that purchasing gifts for him or her is the best investment that you can make.

IF YOUR SPOUSE'S LOVE LANGUAGE IS RECEIVING GIFTS:

1. Try a parade of gifts. Leave a box of candy for your spouse in the morning; have flowers delivered in the afternoon; give him a gift in the evening. When your spouse asks, "What is going on?" You respond "just trying to fill your love tank!"
2. Let nature be your guide. The next time you take a walk through the neighborhood, keep your eyes open for a gift for your spouse. It may be a stone, a stick, or a feather. You may even attach special meaning to your natural gift. For example, a smooth stone may symbolize your marriage with many of the rough places now polished. A feather may symbolize how your spouse is the "wind beneath your wings."
3. Discover the value of "handmade originals." Make a gift for your spouse. This may require you to enroll in a class: ceramics, silversmithing, painting, wood carving, etc. Your main purpose for enrolling is to make your spouse a gift. A hand made gift often becomes a family heirloom.
4. Give your spouse a gift each day for a week. It need not be a special week, just any week. I promise you it will become "The Week That Was!" If you are really energetic, you can make it "The Month That Was!" No – your spouse will not expect you to keep this up for a lifetime.
5. Keep a "Gift Idea Notebook." Every time you hear your spouse say, "I really like that," write it down in your notebook. Listen carefully and you will get quite a list. This will serve as a guide when you get ready to select a gift. To prime the pump, you could look through a favorite online shopping site together.
6. Enlist a "personal shopper." If you really don't have a clue as to how to select a gift for your spouse, ask a friend or family member who knows your wife and husband well to help you. Most people enjoy making a friend happy by getting them a gift, especially if it is with your money.
7. Offer the gift of presence. Say to your spouse, "I want to offer the gift of my presence at any event or on any occasion you would like this month. You tell me when, and I will make every effort to be there." Get ready! Be positive! Who knows, you may enjoy the symphony or hockey game.
8. Give your spouse a book and agree to read it yourself. Then offer to discuss together a chapter each week. Don't choose a book that you want him or her to read. Choose a book on a topic in which you know your spouse has an interest: sex, football, needlework, money management, child rearing, religion, backpacking.
9. Give a lasting tribute. Give a gift to your spouse's church or favorite charity in honor of her birthday, your anniversary, or another occasion. Ask the charity to send a card informing your spouse of what you have done. The church or charity will be excited and so will your spouse.
10. Give a living gift. Purchase and plant a tree or flowering shrub in honor of your spouse. You may plant it in your own yard where you can water and nurture it, or where others can also enjoy it. You will get credit for this one year after year.



President Calvin Coolidge

“No person was ever honored for what they received, they were honored for what they gave.”

~ US President Calvin Coolidge

The only way to maintain an attitude of giving is to make it your habit to give – of your time, attention, money and resources.

The measure of a leader is not how many people serve him or but how many people they serve.

The author John Bunyan once wrote, “you have not lived today unless you have done something for someone who can never repay you”

Once we reach a certain level in life, the most valuable thing that you have to give is yourself. The greatest thing that we can do is to find someone to pour your life into.

“All that is not given is lost.” Let’s make it our goal to give it all away!

The 5 Love Languages

Words of Affirmation

Encouraging Words

Giving verbal compliments is only one way to express words of affirmation to your spouse. Another dialect is encouraging words. The word encourage means “to inspire courage.” All of us have areas in which we feel insecure. We lack courage, and that lack of courage often hinders us from accomplishing the positive things that we would like to do. The latent potential within your spouse in his or her areas of insecurity may await your encouraging words.

Most of us have more potential than we will ever develop. What holds us back is often a lack of courage. A loving spouse can supply that all-important catalyst.

Kind Words

Love is kind. If then we are to communicate love verbally, we must use kind

words. That has to do with the way we speak. The same sentence can have two different meanings, depending on how you say it. The statement, “I love you,” when said with kindness and tenderness, can be a genuine expression of love. But what about “I love you?” The question mark changes the whole meaning of those three words. Sometimes our words say one thing, but our tone of voice says another. We are sending double messages. Our spouse will usually interpret our message based on our tone of voice, not the words we use.

Humble Words

Love makes requests, not demands. When I demand things from my spouse, I become a parent and she the child. In marriage, we are equal, adult partners. We are not perfect to be sure, but we are adults and we are parents. If we are to



Father of the
United States Navy

develop an intimate relationship, we need to know each other's desires. If we wish to love each other, we need to know what the other person wants.

More Ways to Affirm

You also may want to try giving indirect words of affirmation – that is, saying positive things about your spouse when he or she is not present. Eventually, someone will tell your spouse, and you will get full credit for love.

IF YOUR SPOUSE'S LOVE LANGUAGE IS WORDS OF AFFIRMATION:

1. To remind yourself that, "Words of Affirmation" is your spouse's primary love language, print the following 3X5 card and put it on a mirror or other place where you will see it daily:

Words are important!
Words are important!
Words are important!
2. For one week, keep a written record of all the words of affirmation you give your spouse each day.

On Monday, I said:
"You did a great job on this meal."
"You really look nice in that outfit."
"I appreciate your picking up the dry cleaning"

On Tuesday, I said :

You might be surprised how well (or how poorly) you are speaking words of affirmation.
3. Set a goal to give your spouse a different compliment each day for one month. If "an apple a day keeps the doctor away." Maybe a compliment a day will keep the counselor away. (You may want to record these compliments also, so you will not duplicate the statements.)
4. As you watch TV, read, or listen to people's conversations, look for words of affirmation that people use. Write those affirming statements in a notebook or keep them electronically. Read through these periodically and select those you could use with your spouse. When you use one, note the date on which you use it. Your notebook may become your love book. Remember, words are important!
5. Write a love letter, a love paragraph, or a love sentence to your spouse, and give it quietly or with fanfare! You may someday find your love letter tucked away in some special place. Words are important!
6. Compliment your spouse in the presence of his parents or friends. You will get double credit: Your spouse will feel loved and the parents will feel lucky to have such a great son-in-law or daughter-in-law.
7. Look for your spouse's strengths and tell her how much you appreciate those strengths. Chances are she will work hard to live up to her reputation.
8. Tell your children how great their mother or father is. Do this behind your spouse's back and in her presence.



John Paul Jones and Benjamin Franklin

John Paul Jones was the “father of the United States Navy” who famously said, “I have not yet begun to fight.”

He was brave, bold, passionate ... and not the kindest of men.

John Paul Jones was the protégé of Benjamin Franklin who saw this fault in him and wrote him a letter once where he said,

“Hereafter, if you should observe an occasion to give your officers and friends a little more praise than is their due, and confess more fault than you can justly be charged with, you will only become the sooner for it, a Great Captain.

Criticizing and censuring almost everyone you have to do with will diminish friends, increase enemies, and thereby hurt your affairs.”

There is a very true saying that we should “Be kind...everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle that you know nothing about.”

Sometimes we can fall into the easy trap, of “speaking rashly which is like the cutting of a sword.” However, “what the wise person says brings healing.”

This is a big deal for us because when people know that our “default mode” is to encourage them, it draws people to us. This is what social scientists call the Primacy Effect, what is the primary impression that our people have of us?

As Franklin encouraged John Paul Jones, we can ask ourselves, “What positive, encouraging thing can I say to each person I will see today to build on the Primacy Effect?”

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

Introduction – His Needs and Her Needs

Incompatible and Irresistible

There are two important words that can describe a marriage: incompatible and irresistible.

When a husband and wife can't get along, we may describe them as incompatible. Yet, at one time, we would have called those same two people irresistible to each other. Because they found each other irresistible, they made a lifetime commitment in marriage. Couples start out irresistible and only become incompatible as they leave each other's needs unmet. When someone outside the marriage offers to meet those needs, an affair starts.

The key to avoid this is to understand his needs and her needs in a marriage. Based on psychologists, these are the basic needs of a husband and wife. As long as these needs are being met, the couple remains irresistible.

The Irresistible Man

Any husband can make himself irresistible to his wife by learning to meet her five most important emotional needs.

1. **Affection.** Her husband tells her that he loves her with words, cards, flowers, gifts, and common courtesies. He hugs and kisses her many times each day, creating an environment of affection that clearly and repeatedly expresses his love for her
2. **Conversation.** He sets time aside every day to talk to her. They may talk about events in their lives, their children, their feelings, or their plans. But whatever the topic, she enjoys the conversation because it is never judgmental, always informative and constructive. She talks to him as much as she would like, and responds with interest. He is never too busy "to just talk."
3. **Honesty and openness.** He tells her everything about himself leaving nothing out that might later surprise her. He describes his positive and negative feelings, events of his past, his daily schedule, and his plans for the future. He never leaves her with a



USS Lexington (CV-2), nicknamed "Lady Lex," was an early aircraft carrier built for the United States Navy. She was the lead ship of the Lexington class; her only sister ship, Saratoga, was commissioned a month earlier.

The ship entered service in 1928 and was assigned to the Pacific Fleet for her entire career. Lexington and Saratoga were used to develop and refine carrier tactics in a series of annual exercises before World War II.

On more than one occasion these included successfully staged surprise attacks on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

false impression and is truthful about his thoughts, feelings, intentions, and behavior.

4. **Financial support.** He assumes the responsibility to house, feed, and clothe the family. If his income is insufficient to provide essential support, he resolves the problem by upgrading his skills to increase his salary. He does not work long hours, keeping himself from his wife and family, but is able to provide necessary support by working a forty-to forty-five hour week. While he encourages his wife to pursue a career, he does not depend on her salary for living expenses.
5. **Family Commitment.** He commits sufficient time and energy to the moral and educational development of the children. He reads to them, engages in sports with them, and takes them on frequent outings. He reads books and attends lectures with his wife on the subject of child development so that they will do a good job training the children. He and she discuss training methods and objectives until they agree. He does not proceed with any plan of training or discipline without her approval. He recognizes that his care of the children is critically important to her.

Whenever a wife finds a husband who exhibits all five qualities, she will find him irresistible. But a note of caution: If he exhibits only four of them, she will experience a void that will nag persistently and incessantly for fulfillment.

The Irresistible Woman

A wife makes herself irresistible to her husband by learning to meet his five most important emotional needs.

1. **Sexual fulfillment.** His wife meets this need by becoming a terrific sexual partner. She studies her own sexual response to recognize and understand what brings out the best in her; then she shares this information with him, and together they learn to have a sexual relationship that both find repeatedly satisfying and enjoyable.
2. **Recreational companionship.** She develops an interest in the recreational activities he enjoys most and tries to become proficient at them. If she finds she cannot enjoy them, she encourages him to consider other activities that they can enjoy together. She becomes his favorite recreational companion and he associates her with his most enjoyable moments of relaxation.

3. **Physical attractiveness.** She keeps herself physically fit with diet and exercise and she wears her hair, makeup, and clothes in a way that he finds attractive and tasteful. He is attracted to her in private and proud of her in public.

4. **Domestic support.** She creates a home that offers him a refuge from the stresses of life. She manages the household responsibilities in a way that encourages him to spend time at home enjoying his family.

5. **Admiration.** She understands and appreciates him more than anyone else. She reminds him of his value and achievements and helps him maintain self-confidence. She avoids criticizing him. She is proud of him, not out of duty, but from a profound respect for the man she chose to marry.

When a man finds a woman who exhibits all five qualities, he will find her irresistible. But again the same note of caution must be sounded for women that sounded for the men. If a wife meets only four of her husband's five emotional needs, he will experience a void that can lead to problems. Like her husband, a wife must seek to bat 1,000 in meeting basic needs. Being satisfied with meeting three or four of his basic needs will not make you totally irresistible.



USS Langley, the first American aircraft carrier, joined the fleet in 1922 and served as the floating laboratory for naval flight operations

The First Aircraft Carriers

The first US aircraft carrier, USS Langley, entered service in 1922. It was not an impressive vessel by today's standards – a converted collier with a top speed of 14 knots – but it was a start. The next two were much larger and faster. USS Lexington and USS Saratoga were originally meant to be battle cruisers. But at the Washington Conference in 1922 the leading naval powers agreed to limits on warship numbers. The battle cruisers could not be built – but two fleet carriers could.

Saratoga and Lexington were each capable of carrying 81 aircraft and had a top speed of 34 knots – faster than any warship of comparable size. In naval exercises from 1929 onward they proved their ability to play a key role as an offensive strike force.

Notably, in 1932 more than 150 planes from the two carriers executed a mock attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor, which achieved total surprise and would have had a devastating effect if really carried out by an enemy power – the Japanese, for example.

We, too, can know our own vulnerabilities and prepare for future attacks.

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

His Need – Sexual Fulfillment

His Need Sexual Fulfillment

We often confuse sex and affection. Affection is an act of love that is not sexual and can be received from friends, relatives, children, and even pets. However, acts that can show affection, such as hugging and kissing, that are done with a sexual motive are actually sex, not affection.

Most people know whether or not they have a need for sex, but in case there is any uncertainty, these are some of the most obvious symptoms.

Making Love When “In Love”

A sexual need usually predates your current relationship and is somewhat independent of your relationship. While you may have discovered a deep desire to make love to your spouse since you’ve been in love, it isn’t quite the same thing as a sexual need. Wanting to make love when you are in love is sometimes merely a reflection of wanting to be emotionally and physically close.

Fantasies

Sexual fantasies are usually a dead giveaway for a sexual need. Fantasies in general are good indicators of emotional needs – your most common fantasies usually reflecting your most important needs. If you have imagined what it would be like having your sexual need met in the most fulfilling ways, you probably have a sexual need. The more the fantasy is employed, the greater your need.

The Promise

When you married, you and your spouse both promised to be faithful to each other for life. This means that you agreed to be each other’s only sexual partner “until death do us part.” You made this commitment because you trusted each other to meet your sexual needs, to be sexually available and responsive. The need for sex, then, is a very exclusive need, and if you have it, you will be very dependent on your spouse to meet it for you. You have no other ethical choice.



George Herbert Walker Bush was the last President to serve in World War II. Bush’s service during the war made him a genuine hero.

He was just 18 years old when he signed up and started preflight training at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Ten months later, he was commissioned on June 9, 1943, just a few days before his 19th birthday. That made him the youngest naval aviator at the time.

Bush flew 58 combat missions during the war. Given the call sign “Skin” because of his thin frame, his first duties were as a photographic officer on the USS San Jacinto. After his combat tour, he was reassigned to Norfolk Navy Base, where he helped train new pilots. He was honorably discharged in September 1945, after the Japanese surrendered.

For his service, he earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, three Air Medals and a Presidential Unit Citation.



The nose art of President George Bush's TBM Avenger - a torpedo bomber - during World War II. The plane was named for his then-girlfriend and future wife Barbara.

WWII Aircraft Nose Art

This would not be allowed today, but back in the 1940's, WWII Fighters and bombers were utilized as a canvas for artwork... of a certain kind. Women of the day were depicted in mural-like form along the side of some of the nation's most powerful aircraft.

Some men chose to think only of their special someone back home. Future president George Bush wrote the name of his sweetheart on the nose of each of this torpedo bombers as a Naval Aviator during World War II.

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

His Need – Recreational Companionship

His Need: Recreational Companionship

A need for recreational companionship combines two needs into one: the need to engage in recreational activities and the need to have a companion.

During your courtship, you and your spouse were probably each other's favorite recreational companions. It's not uncommon for women to join men in hunting, fishing, watching football, or other activities they would never choose on their own. They simply want to spend as much time as possible with the man they like and that means going where he goes.

The same is true of men. Shopping centers are not unfamiliar to men in love. They will also take their dates out to dinner, watch romantic movies, and attend concerts and plays. They take every opportunity to be with someone they like and try to enjoy the activity to guarantee more dates in the future.

There's no denying that marriage changes a relationship considerably. But does it have to end the activities that helped make the relationship so compatible? Can't a husband's favorite recreational companion be his wife and vice versa?

If recreational activities are important to you and you like to have someone join you for them to be fulfilling, include recreational companionship on your list of needs. Think about it for a moment in terms of an investment. How much do you enjoy these activities and how many love units would your spouse be depositing whenever you enjoyed them together? What a waste it would be if someone else got credit for all those love units! If it is someone of the opposite sex, it would be downright dangerous.

Who should get credit for all those love units? The one you should love the most, your spouse. That's precisely why it's so beneficial for a husband and wife to be each other's favorite recreational companion. It's one of the simplest ways to strengthen your relationship.



Formation Flying

In formation flying, the lead is responsible for traffic avoidance, navigation, and ATC communication and is used as a fixed frame of reference to maintain a specific position.





Formation Flying

To those unfamiliar with formation flying, flight within a wingspan's distance of another airplane looks eerily similar to an imminent collision. However, it is some of the most fun and rewarding flying a pilot will ever experience.

Although the pilots who so skillfully entertain crowds at airshows make formation flying look easy, it is much more difficult than it appears. Learning to safely fly in formation takes extensive training and experience. In addition to the tremendous flying abilities and concentration involved, formation pilots must be skilled communicators. Prior to each flight, the pilots discuss and clearly define objectives for the mission. A typical preflight briefing covers everything from engine start and taxi procedures to radio failure and emergencies.

Formation flying can be some of the most fun that you can have as a pilot.
"Formation flying" as a family can also be a fun way to lead your family to new heights.

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

His Need – An Attractive Spouse

His Need: An Attractive Spouse

For many people, physical appearance can become one of the greatest sources of love units. If you have this need, an attractive person will not only get your attention, but may distract you from whatever you are doing. In fact, that's what may have first drawn you to your spouse – his or her physical appearance.

There are some who consider this need to be temporary and important only in the beginning of a relationship. After a couple gets to know each other better, some feel that physical attractiveness should take a back seat to deeper and more intimate needs.

But that's not the common experience of most men. For many, the need for an attractive spouse continues on through marriage, and just seeing the spouse looking attractive deposits love units.

Among the various aspects of physical attractiveness, weight generally gets the most attention. However, choice of clothing, hair style, makeup, and personal hygiene also come together to make a person attractive. It can be very subjective, and you are the judge of what is attractive to you.

If the attractiveness of your spouse makes you feel great, and loss of that attractiveness would make you feel very frustrated, you should probably include this category on your list of emotional needs.



Amelia Earhart

Amelia Earhart discovered her passion for aviation while working as a nurse's aide at Toronto Spadina Military Hospital. She and some friends would spend time at hangars and flying fields, talking to pilots and watching aerial shows. Later in life, by an act of the U.S. Congress, she became the first woman to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross

"for heroic courage and skill as a navigator, at the risk of her life, by her nonstop flight in her plane, unnamed, from Harbor Grace, Newfoundland, to Londonderry, Ireland, on 20 May 1932, by which she became the first and only woman, and the second person, to cross the Atlantic Ocean in a plane in solo flight"



Amelia Earhart

While at work one afternoon in April 1928, Amelia Earhart got a phone call from Captain Hilton H. Railey, who asked her, “Would you like to fly the Atlantic?” The project coordinators interviewed her and asked her to accompany pilot Wilmer Stultz and co-pilot / mechanic Louis Gordon on a transatlantic flight, nominally as a passenger, but with the added duty of keeping the flight log. Since most of the flying was on instruments and Earhart had no training for this type of flying, she did not pilot the airplane. When interviewed after landing, she said, “Stultz did all the flying – had to. I was just baggage, like a sack of potatoes.” She added, “...maybe someday I’ll try it alone.”

Trading on her physical resemblance to Charles Lindbergh, some newspapers and magazines began referring to her as “Lady Lindy.” Her publicist (and future husband), George Putnam, began to heavily promote her in a campaign that included publishing a book that she authored, a series of lectures, and using pictures of her in mass marketing endorsements for products including luggage, women’s clothing and sportswear. These celebrity endorsements helped Earhart to finance her flying, eventually allowing her to become the second person, and the first woman, to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

His Need – Domestic Support

His Need: Domestic Support

The need for domestic support is a time bomb. At first it seems irrelevant, a throwback to more primitive times. But for many couples, the need explodes after a few years of marriage, surprising both husband and wife.

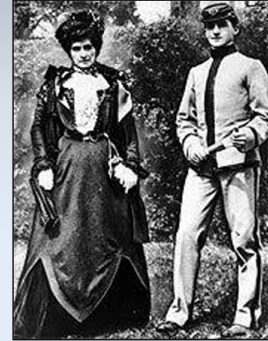
Domestic support involves the creation of a peaceful and well-managed home environment. It includes cooking meals, washing dishes, washing and ironing clothes, cleaning house, and child care. If you feel very fulfilled when your spouse does these things and very annoyed when they are not done, you have the need for domestic support.

In earlier generations, it was assumed that all husbands had this need and all wives would naturally meet it. Times have changed and needs have changed along with them. Now many men would rather have their wives meet their needs for affection or conversation, needs that have traditionally been more characteristic of women. Many women, especially career women, gain a great deal of pleasure having their husbands create a peaceful and well-managed home environment.

Marriage usually begins with a willingness of both spouses to share domestic responsibilities. Newlyweds commonly wash dishes together, make the bed together, and divide many household tasks. The groom welcomes his wife's help in doing what he had to do by himself as a bachelor. At this point in marriage, neither of them would identify domestic support as an important emotional need. However, the time bomb is ticking.

When does the need for domestic support explode? When the children arrive! Children create huge needs – both a greater need for income and greater domestic responsibilities. The previous division of labor becomes obsolete. Both spouses must take on new responsibilities – and which ones will they take?

At this point in your marriage, you may find no need for domestic support at all. That may change later when you have children. In fact, as soon as you are expecting your first child, you will find yourselves dramatically changing your priorities.



*General Douglas MacArthur
and His Mother*

When General Douglas MacArthur enrolled at the U.S. Military Academy, his mother moved to West Point as well and stayed at a hotel on campus grounds. MacArthur's mother had told him he, "must grow up to be a great man."

Her watchful eye apparently worked as MacArthur graduated first out of 94 cadets in the class of 1903 by earning 2,424.2 points out of a maximum of 2,470.



The support which MacArthur's mother provided to him made a lasting impression. When he had his only child, a son, he attempted to show a similar commitment. His immense responsibilities caused this commitment to be expressed differently. One of the ways that this commitment was expressed was when General Douglas MacArthur penned this prayer for his son Arthur – a father's prayer that he wrote in the Philippines during the desperate early days of the Pacific war.

According to the General's biographer and confidant, Maj. Gen. Courtney Whitney, the family repeated this MacArthur prayer many times during early morning devotions.

"Build Me A Son"

Build me a son, O Lord,
who will be strong enough to know when he is weak,
and brave enough to face himself when he is afraid;
one who will be proud and unbending in honest defeat,
and humble and gentle in victory.

Build me a son whose wishbone will not be
where his backbone should be;
a son who will know Thee- and that
to know himself is the foundation stone of knowledge.

Lead him, I pray, not in the path of ease and comfort,
but under the stress and spur of difficulties and challenge.
Here, let him learn to stand up in the storm;
here, let him team compassion for those who fall.

Build me a son whose heart will be clear, whose goals will be high;
a son who will master himself before he seeks to master other men;
one who will learn to laugh, yet never forget how to weep;
one who will reach into the future, yet never forget the past.

And after all these things are his,
add, I pray, enough of a sense of humor,
so that he may always be serious,
yet never take himself too seriously.

Give him humility, so that he may always remember
the simplicity of true greatness,
the open mind of true wisdom,
the meekness of true strength.

Then I, his father, will dare to whisper,
"I have not lived in vain."

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

His Need – Admiration

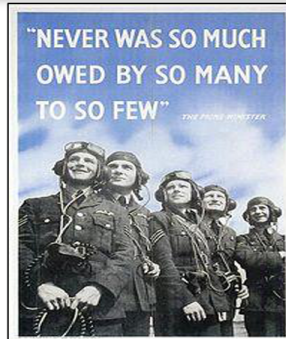
His Need: Admiration

If you have the need for admiration, you may have fallen in love with your spouse partly because of his or her compliments to you. Some people just love to be told that they are appreciated. Your spouse may also have been careful not to criticize you. If you have a need for admiration, criticism may hurt you deeply.

Many people have a deep desire to be respected, valued, and appreciated by their spouse. They need to be affirmed clearly and often. There's nothing wrong with feeling that way.

Appreciation is one of the easiest needs to meet. Just a compliment, and presto, you've made your spouse's day. On the other hand, it's also easy to be critical. A trivial word of rebuke can be very upsetting to some people, ruining their day and withdrawing love units at an alarming rate.

Your spouse may have the power to build up or deplete his or her account in your love bank with just a few words. If you can be affected that easily, be sure to add admiration to your list of important emotional needs.



The Battle of Britain, during World War II, has been described as the first major military campaign fought entirely by air forces.

The battle was for the defense of Great Britain against unremitting and destructive air raids conducted by the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) from July through September 1940, after the fall of France. Victory for the Luftwaffe in the air battle would have exposed Great Britain to invasion by the German army, which was then in control of the ports of France only a few miles away across the English Channel. The battle was won by the Royal Air Force (RAF) Fighter Command, whose victory not only blocked the possibility of invasion but also created the conditions for Great Britain's survival, for the extension of the war, and for the eventual defeat of Nazi Germany.

Upon his exit from the bunker at RAF Uxbridge on 16 August 1940 when visiting the No. 11 Group RAF Operations Room during a day of battle, Churchill told Major General Hastings Ismay, 'Don't speak to me, I have never been so moved'. After several minutes of silence he said, 'Never in the history of mankind has so much been owed by so many to so few'



British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in his underground War Room bunker during the darkest days for the UK in World War II

A Reputation to Uphold

In this bunker, Prime Minister Winston Churchill helped to uplift millions of his countrymen in the wake of Britain's June 1940 defeat at the Battle of Dunkirk.

He gave the English people a *reputation to uphold*. He inspired them, he motivated them; he challenged them. In response, they rose to the occasion. They loved him for it.

This is a part of the speech that he gave to rally his people:

“We shall fight in France, we shall fight in the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender...”

Because “As a person thinks within themselves, so they are”
(Proverbs 23:7)

Researchers tell us that it takes a person an average of 10 years to become an “elite performer,” an expert in their field. The same research shows that this time is reduced dramatically if they already feel that they are gaining a recognizable reputation.

A few brief words FROM YOU, TODAY, can give your loved ones a reason to rise to the challenges of life by giving them a reputation in your eyes to uphold.

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

Her Need – Affection

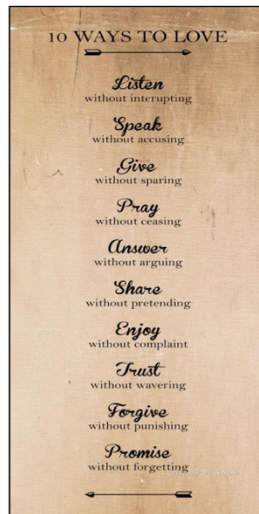
Her Need: Affection

Quite simply, affection is the expression of love. It symbolizes security, protection, comfort, and approval – vitally important ingredients in any relationship. When one spouse is affectionate to the other, the following messages are sent:

1. *You are important to me, and I will care for you and protect you.*
2. *I am concerned about the problems you face and will be there for you when you need me.*

A hug can say those things. When we hug our friends and relatives, we are demonstrating our care for them. And there are other ways to show our affection – a greeting card, an “I love you” note, a bouquet of flowers, holding hands, back rubs, phone calls, and conversations with thoughtful and loving expressions can all communicate affection.

Affection is, for many, the essential cement of a relationship. Without it, many people feel totally alienated. With it, they become emotionally bonded. If you feel terrific when your spouse is affectionate and you feel terrible when there is not enough affection, you have the emotional need for affection.



Charles Lindbergh

At age 25 in 1927, Charles Lindbergh went from obscurity as a U.S. Air Mail pilot to instantaneous world fame. New York hotelier Raymond Orteig announced a \$25,000 prize for the first person to fly nonstop from either New York to Paris, or Paris to New York. Orteig first proposed his transatlantic flight challenge in 1919 but did not receive his first serious competitors until 1926.

By the time Lindbergh made his flight, six other competitors had died in the attempt.



Charles Lindbergh's ticker-tape parade in New York City

Showered with Affection

In 1927, the city of New York honored famed aviator Charles "Lucky Lindy" Lindbergh with a ticker-tape parade to celebrate his May 21st flight in the Spirit of St. Louis, the first solo airplane flight across the Atlantic Ocean. At just 25 years old, Lindbergh flew nonstop from New York to Paris, and according to the New York Times, an estimated four million people attended the ticker-tape parade throughout the city to celebrate his heroic feat.

When his plane touched down in Paris, Lindbergh was met by a crowd of 100,000 people who ran toward his plane at Le Bourget Airfield. While that was an impressive welcoming, New Yorkers took it further. He wrote in an article for the Times: "People told me the New York reception would be the biggest of all, but I had no idea it was going to be so much more overwhelming than all the others...All I can say is that the welcome was wonderful, wonderful."

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

Her Need – Conversation

Her Need: Conversation

Unlike sex, conversation is not a need that can be met exclusively in marriage. Our need for conversation can be ethically met by almost anyone. If it is one of your most important emotional needs, whoever meets it best will deposit so many love units that you may fall in love with that person. So if it's your need, be sure that your spouse is the one who meets it the best and most often.

Men and women don't have too much difficulty talking to each other during courtship. That's a time of information gathering for both partners. Both are highly motivated to discover each other's likes and dislikes, personal background, current interests, and plans for the future.

After marriage, many women find that the man who would spend hours talking to her on the telephone, now seems to have lost all interest in talking to her and spends his spare time watching television or reading. If

your need for conversation was fulfilled during courtship, you expect it to be after marriage.

If you see conversation as a practical necessity, primarily as a means to an end, you probably don't have much of a need for it. If you have a craving just to talk to someone, if you pick up the telephone just because you feel like talking, if you enjoy conversation in its own right, consider conversation to be one of your most important emotional needs

Learning to Listen

Numerous books and articles have been written about the art of quality conversations. Some tips on how to listen well:

1. **Maintain eye contact when your spouse is talking.** That keeps your mind from wandering and communicates that he/she has your full attention.
2. **Don't listen to your spouse and do something else at the same time.** Remember, quality time is giving



The "Great Communicator"

Many American presidents have made an impact on our country as great communicators but only one president has been called the "Great Communicator," and that was Ronald Reagan.

When speaking in public, he came across as a relaxed, likable and competent leader.

Reagan was so popular because when he spoke, people knew that he was the real deal. There is a saying that, "out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks." (Matthew 12:34)

Reagan was a great communicator not just because of his experience but because when he spoke people knew that he meant it. When it came to leading the country, people knew who he was, where he stood and what he wanted...and they couldn't wait to get on board with him.

someone your undivided attention. If you are doing something that you cannot turn from immediately, tell your spouse the truth. A positive approach might be, "I know you are trying to talk to me and I'm interested, but I want to give you my full attention. I can't do that right now, but if you will give me ten minutes to finish this, I'll sit down and listen to you." Most spouses will respect such a request.

3. **Listen for feelings.** Ask yourself, "What emotion is my spouse experiencing?" When you think you have the answer, confirm it. For example, "It sounds to me like you are feeling disappointed because I forgot _____." That gives him the chance to clarify his feelings. It also communicates that you are listening intently to what he is saying.
4. **Observe body language.** Clenched fists, trembling hands, tears, furrowed brows, and eye movement may give you clues as to what the other is feeling. Sometimes body language speaks one message while words speak another. Ask for clarification to make sure you know what she or he is really thinking and feeling.
5. **Refuse to interrupt.** Recent research has indicated that the average individual listens for only seventeen seconds before interrupting and interjecting his own ideas. If you give your undivided attention while you are talking, your spouse will refrain from defending themselves or hurling accusations at you or dogmatically stating their position. The goal is to

discover your spouse's thoughts and feelings. The objective is not to defend yourself or to set them straight. It is to understand them.

Learning to Talk

Self-revelation does not come easy for some people. Many adults grew up in homes where the expression of thoughts and feelings was not encouraged but condemned. To request a toy was to receive a lecture on the sad state of family finances. The child went away feeling guilty for having the desire, and he quickly learned not to express his desires. When he expressed anger, the parents responded with harsh and condemning words. Thus, the child learned that expressing angry feelings is not appropriate. If the child was made to feel guilty for expressing disappointment at not being able to go to the store with his father, he learned to hold his disappointment inside. By the time we reach adulthood, many people have learned to deny their feelings. We are no longer in touch with our emotional selves.

If you need to learn the language of quality conversation, begin by noting the emotions you feel away from home. Carry a small notepad and keep it

with you daily. Three times each day, ask yourself, "What emotions have I felt in the last three hours? What did I feel on the way to work when the driver behind me was riding my bumper? What did I feel when I stopped at the gas station and the automatic pump did not shut off and the side of the car was covered in gas? What did I feel when I got to the office and found that the project I was working on has to be completed in three days when I thought I had another two weeks?"

Write down your feelings in the notepad and a word or two to help you remember the event corresponding to the feeling.

Do that exercise three times a day and you will develop an awareness of your emotional nature. Using your notepad, communicate your emotions and the events briefly with your spouse as many days as possible.

Remember, emotions themselves are neither good nor bad. They are simply our physiological responses to the events of life. Based on our thoughts and emotions, we eventually make decisions.

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

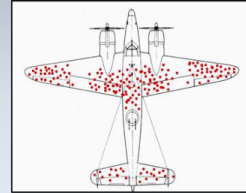
Her Need – Honesty and Openness

Her Need: Honesty and Openness

Most of us want an honest relationship with our spouse. Some people have a need for such a relationship because honesty and openness give us a sense of security.

To feel secure, we want accurate information about our spouse's thoughts, feelings, habits, likes, dislikes, personal history, daily activities, and plans for the future. If a spouse does not provide honest and open communication, trust can be undermined and the feelings of security can eventually be destroyed. We can't trust the signals that are being sent and we have no foundation on which to build a solid relationship. Instead of adjusting to each other, we feel off balance; instead of growing together, we grow apart.

Aside from the practical considerations of honesty and openness, there are some of us who feel happy and fulfilled when our spouse reveals his or her most private thoughts to us. We can also feel very frustrated when they are hidden. That reaction is evidence of an emotional need, one that can and should be met in marriage.



During WWII, the Navy tried to determine where they needed to up-armor their aircraft to ensure they came back home. They ran an analysis of where planes had been shot up and came up with this graphic. Obviously it seemed, the places that needed to be up-armored were the red dots.

Abraham Wald, a statistician, disagreed. He thought they should better armor the nose area, engines, and mid-body. This seemed to be crazy, of course.

Except, Mr. Wald realized what the others didn't. The planes were getting shot there too, but they weren't making it home. What the Navy thought it had done was analyze where aircraft were suffering the most damage. What they had actually done was analyze where aircraft could suffer the most damage without catastrophic failure. All of the places that weren't hit? Those places had been shot there and crashed. They weren't looking at the whole sample set, only the survivors.



Captain Abrashoff's ship, the USS Benfold

Making Mistakes

There is a powerful truth that "humility comes before honor, but pride comes before a fall."

Former US Navy Captain Michael Abrashoff writes in his book, *It's Your Ship* "Whenever I could not get the results I wanted, I swallowed my temper and turned inward to see if I was part of the problem.

I asked myself 3 questions:

Did I clearly articulate the goals?

Did I give people enough time and resources to accomplish the task?

Did I give them enough training?

He discovered that 90 percent of the time, he was at least as much a part of the problem as his people were."

Admitting our mistakes and taking responsibility for them will allow us to go the next step in our relationships.

Humility comes before honor.

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

Her Need – Financial Support

Her Need: Financial Support

People often marry for the financial security that their spouse provides them. In other words, part of the reason they marry is for money. Is financial support one of your important emotional needs?

It may be difficult for you to know how much you need financial support, especially if your spouse has always been gainfully employed. However, what if, before marriage, your spouse had told you not to expect any income from him or her. Would it have affected your decision to marry them? Or what if your spouse could not find work, and you had to financially support him or her throughout life? Would that withdraw love units?

You may have a need for financial support if you expect your spouse to earn a living. You definitely have that need if you do

not expect to be earning a living yourself, at least during part of your marriage.

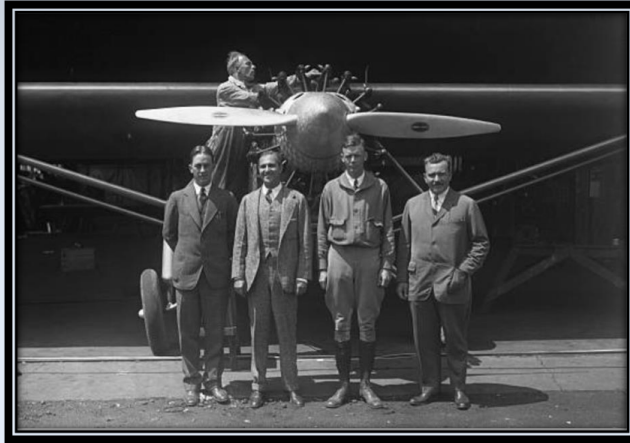
What constitutes financial support? Earning enough to buy everything you could possibly desire or earning just enough to get by? Different couples would answer this differently and the same couples might answer differently in different stages of life. Like many of these emotional needs, financial support is sometimes hard to talk about. As a result, many couples have hidden expectations, assumptions, and resentments. Try to understand what you expect from your spouse financially to feel fulfilled. Ask yourself what it would take for you to feel frustrated? Your analysis will help you determine if you have a need for financial support.



Captain Charles A. Lindbergh, Missouri National Guard, and members of his National Guard unit, the 110th Observation Squadron, after he flew solo across the Atlantic Ocean, 1927



Lindbergh was working as an airmail pilot when he first dreamed of flying across the Atlantic



Lindbergh's Financial Backers

Lindbergh's Financial Support

It was in the fall of 1926, during the lonely hours of flying the mail at night, that a young airmail pilot for Robinson Aircraft Corporation had his first thoughts about flying across the cold Atlantic water in an attempt to capture the elusive Orteig Prize and its' \$25,000 reward.

As he considered how to go about getting funding for what would become a historic transatlantic journey, he considered using his personal savings but realized that would not be enough. He organized a presentation for a number of local St. Louis businessmen, hoping they could see his vision for commercial aviation, the proven possibilities of current modern aircraft, and agree to sponsor his attempt to make a transatlantic crossing. "First, I'll show them how a non-stop flight between America and Europe will demonstrate the possibilities of aircraft and help place St. Louis in the foreground of aviation. Second, I'll show them that a modern airplane is capable of making the flight to Paris and that a successful flight will cover its own costs because of the Orteig Prize," Lindbergh later wrote in his book *The Spirit of St Louis*.

Major Albert Bond Lambert was the first to pledge \$1,000 toward the flight after Lindbergh committed his own personal savings of \$2,000. By February 1927, Lindbergh received complete financing for his flight. The group that financed him became known as the St. Louis backers. With the financial support of the St. Louis backers, Lindbergh was given the freedom to fulfill his dream.

Building an Affair Proof Marriage

Her Need – Family Commitment

Her Need: Family Commitment

In addition to a greater need for income and domestic responsibilities, the arrival of children creates in many people the need for family commitment. Again, if you don't have children yet, you may not sense this need, but when the first child arrives, a change may take place that you didn't anticipate.

Family commitment is not just child care – feeding, clothing, or watching over children to keep them safe. Child care falls under the category of domestic support. Family commitment, on the other hand, is a responsibility for the development of the children, teaching them the values of cooperation and care for each other. It is spending quality time with your children to help them develop into successful adults.

Evidence of this need is a craving for your spouse's involvement in the educational and moral development of your children. When he or she is helping care for them, you feel very fulfilled and when he or she neglects their development, you feel very frustrated.

We all want our children to be successful, but if you have the need for family commitment, your spouse's participation in family activities will deposit carloads of love units. In the same way, your spouse's neglect of your children will noticeably withdraw them.



High Ops Tempo and Family Commitment

Many fighter units are executing a "six-on-six-off" schedule – they are gone for six months, then home for six months before leaving again. Tanker and transport pilots continue to see high workloads. It is not uncommon for a transport pilot to be gone 250-300 days out of the year.

Over time it can take a toll, especially on those with families. There are many articles on the emotional and psychological effects a high operational tempo can have on the families of those who deploy. While difficult to show family commitment in these situations, it is not impossible.



Prince William and Prince Harry

A “Royal” Family Commitment to Fly

The British royal family is full of military pilots. Prince William served as a search and rescue pilot at RAF Valley in Wales. Prince Harry, his brother, flew Apache helicopters with the Army Air Corps, serving in Afghanistan.

Their uncle, Prince Andrew, was a career naval officer who flew helicopters with distinction in the Falklands War. Their father, Prince Charles, qualified as a military helicopter pilot at RNAS Yeovilton in 1974.

Even their grandfather, Prince Philip, is a qualified pilot. He earned his Royal Air Force wings in 1953.



Prince Charles flying with Prince Philip behind him

Apologizing Well

Introduction

A Needed Skill

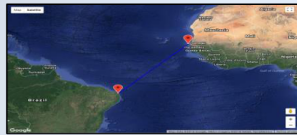
The need for apologies permeates all human relationships. Marriage, parenting, dating, and vocational relationships all require apologies. Without apologies, anger builds and pushes us to demand justice. When, as we see it,

justice is not forthcoming, we often take matters into our own hands and seek revenge on those who have wronged us.

In a family, this cycle, left unchecked, can lead to patterns of extreme

dysfunction. Different people respond to apology most sincerely in different ways. This is their “apology language.” Learning how apologizing works and committing to do it well can change our lives.

Admitting the Need for a Course Correction



The year was 1937. Amelia Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, were on one of the longest legs of their around-the-world attempt — crossing the South Atlantic from Fortaleza, Brazil to Dakar, Senegal. As Amelia sighted the African coast in the distance, Fred, who was seated at the navigator’s station behind the auxiliary fuel tanks, passed Amelia a note containing the latest course correction based upon his calculations:

3:36 Change to 36 degrees. Estimate 79 miles to Dakar from 3:36 p.m.

While Fred was an experienced navigator, Amelia chose to disregard his instructions. For some reason, she believed that they could not have drifted as far off course as Fred’s navigation indicated. In fact, Amelia scribbled under Fred’s note: *What put us north?*

After flying for another 50 miles, the two found themselves at Saint-Louis, Senegal, many miles north of their intended destination. The occurrence, **which Amelia later admitted was her error**, fortunately only resulted in a short delay; the next day the pair flew south to Dakar to continue their journey.

Apologizing Well

Expressing Regret

Expressing Regret

The first language of apology is expressing regret. Most commonly, it is expressed in the words "I am sorry." Expressing regret is the emotional aspect of an apology. It is expressing to the offended person your own sense of guilt, shame, and pain that your behavior has hurt

them deeply. It is interesting that when Robert Fulghum wrote his *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, he included as one of the things he learned: "Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody."



*Captain
Eddie Rickenbacker*

The Courage to Express Regret

What do these three men have in common? A race car driver who sets the world speed record, a fighter pilot ace, and a man who survives for 22 days in a raft at sea. Well, for one it was all the same person, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker...and he had the market cornered on Courage!

It has been said, "Courage doesn't mean that you aren't afraid. It means that you do it anyway."

It takes courage to look your spouse in the eye and say, "our marriage is in serious trouble and we've got to do something about it"

It takes courage to build significant relationships with friends, to look another person in the eye and say "isn't it time that we stopped talking about the weather and sports and started getting real about what's going on in your life and mine?"

These things also take Courage. It doesn't mean that we aren't afraid, it means that we do it anyway.

Apologizing Well

Accepting Responsibility

Accepting Responsibility

In saying “I made a mistake” we are admitting that we were wrong. For many individuals, hearing the words “I was wrong” is what communicates to them that the person is sincere in offering her apology. Without these or similar words that accept responsibility for one’s wrong behavior, they will

not sense that the other person has sincerely apologized. It doesn’t matter if you are a well-known politician or a roommate in a college dormitory or husband and wife: understanding this reality can make all the difference in the world. When you sincerely wish to apologize for your behavior.



James Bonham
Died at the Battle of the Alamo

Accepting Responsibility

We’ve all heard of the Alamo. 183 brave defenders stood their ground while surrounded by thousands of attacking Mexican troops. At the end, the defenders of the Alamo, who had refused terms of surrender, were dead to the last man.

What is less known is that one man escaped from the Alamo, James Bonham. He slipped out of the Alamo under cover of darkness, slipped through the enemy lines and raced 95 miles to the Army of Texas to plead for reinforcements.

When told that no reinforcements were available, he chose to race 95 miles back, slipped through the lines again, and died alongside his 182 brothers in arms. That’s responsibility.

A leader can give up anything – except responsibility – let’s commit to modelling it for those who follow behind us.

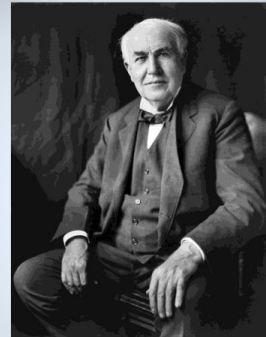
Apologizing Well

Making Restitution

Making Restitution

In the public arena, our emphasis upon restitution is based upon our sense of justice. The one who commits the crime should pay for the wrongdoing. In contrast, in the private sphere of family and other close relationships, our desire for restitution is almost always based upon our need for love. After

being hurt deeply, we need the reassurance that the person who hurt us still loves us. After all, successful family relationships and true friendships are ultimately based on love.



Thomas Edison

Looking for the Best in the Situation

A lot of people know the name Thomas Edison. They know that he was a famous inventor but they don't usually know that what really made him stand out was that he was the first person to get the idea to "mass produce" great ideas.

He built a huge factory in New Jersey and gathered together the greatest inventors from around the world into one place.

When Thomas Edison was sixty-seven years old, his factory was destroyed in a fire, burnt to the ground. He lost everything. At 67 years old, what would your response have been? This was his response the next morning:

"There's value in disaster. All of our mistakes are burned up. Thank God, we can start anew."

There is a quote in the Bible, "For as a man thinks within himself, so he is." (Proverbs 23:7)

Life is hard, setbacks and disappointments will come. Our decision is not in whether or not we will face these times but the attitude that we will have when they come.

If that was the attitude of one of the greatest minds in history, what should be ours?

Apologizing Well

Genuinely Repenting

Genuinely Repenting

The word repentance means “to turn around” or “to change one’s mind.” It is illustrated by someone who is walking west and, for whatever reason, suddenly turns 180 degrees and walks toward the east. In the context of an apology, it means that an individual realizes that his or her present behavior is destructive. The person regrets that pain he or she is causing the other person and chooses to change their behavior.

How then do we speak the language of repentance? It begins with an expression of intent to change. All true repentance begins in the heart. We recognize that what we have done is wrong, that our actions have hurt the one we love. We don’t want to continue this behavior; therefore, we decide that with God’s help, we will change. Then we verbalize this

decision to the person we have offended. It is the decision to change that indicates that we are no longer making excuses. We are not minimizing our behavior but we are accepting full responsibility for our actions.

When we share our intention to change with the person we have offended, we are communicating to them what is going on inside of us. They get a glimpse of our heart – and this often is the language that convinces them that we mean what we say.



Bill Lear

The C-21 is the military version of the ‘Learjet’ corporate jet.

The father of this amazing airplane was a man named Bill Lear. He produced the first corporate jet, the Learjet 23



**C-21
Military Version of
the Learjet**

Whatever It Takes to Make It Right

In 1963, the first Learjet made its maiden voyage and in 1964 Bill Lear delivered the first production jet to a client.

Lear's success was immediate, and he quickly sold a lot of planes. But not long after he got his start, Lear learned that two aircraft he'd built had crashed under mysterious circumstances. Some blamed pilot error, many weren't pointing fingers at Lear, he could have dodged responsibility.

But ... He sent word to all of the owners to ground their airplanes until his team could determine what had caused the crashes.

As he researched the crashes, Lear discovered a potential cause, but he couldn't verify the technical problem on the ground. There was only one sure way to find out whether he had diagnosed the problem correctly. He would have to try to recreate it personally – in the air.

It was a dangerous process, but that's what he did. He personally flew the jet, he nearly lost control and almost met the same fate as the other two pilots who had crashed. Lear developed a new part to correct the problem and fitted all 55 planes with it.

Grounding the planes cost Lear a lot of money and it planted seeds of doubt in the minds of potential customers. As a result, he needed 2 years to rebuild the business. But Lear never regretted his decision. He was willing to risk his success, his fortune, and even his life to solve the mystery of those crashes – but not his integrity. And that takes character.

There is a Proverb that says, "Moral character makes for smooth travelling"
(Proverbs 11:5)

Your character determines who you are. Who you are determines how you see the world. How you see the world determines what you do.

Whether it's flying a Learjet, leading in the military, or leading your family, it's leading with character that counts.

Apologizing Well

Requesting Forgiveness

Requesting Forgiveness

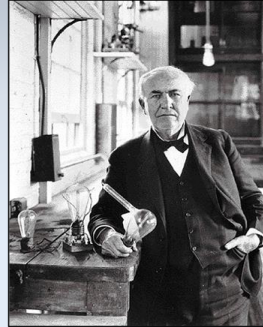
Why would requesting forgiveness be so important?

First, requesting forgiveness indicates to the offended person that you want to see the relationship fully restored. When an offense occurs, immediately it creates an emotional barrier between two people. Until that barrier is removed, the relationship cannot go forward. An apology is an attempt to remove the barrier. If you discover that the person's primary apology language is requesting forgiveness, then this is the surest way to remove the barrier. To that person, this is what indicates that you genuinely want to see the relationship restored.

Second, requesting forgiveness is important because it shows that you realize you have done something wrong – that

you offended the other person, intentionally or unintentionally. What you said or did may not have been morally wrong. You may even have done or said it in jest. But it offended the other person. He or she now holds it against you. It is an offense that has created a rift between the two of you. In that sense it is wrong, and requesting forgiveness is in order.

Third, requesting forgiveness shows that you are willing to put the future of the relationship in the hands of the offended person. You have admitted your wrong; you have expressed regret; you may have offered to make amends. But now you are saying "Will you forgive me?" You know that you cannot answer that question for that person. It is a choice that he or she must make – to forgive or not forgive.



Thomas Edison

***"I have friends
in overalls
whose
friendship I
would not swap
for the favor of
the kings of the
world"***

Forgiveness

When Edison and his staff were developing the incandescent light bulb, it took twenty-four hours to manufacture a single bulb. One day he handed a new bulb to a young errand boy and asked him to take it upstairs to the testing room.

As the boy turned and started up the stairs, he stumbled and fell, and the bulb shattered on the steps. Instead of rebuking the boy, Edison reassured him and then turned to his staff and told them to start working on another bulb.

When it was completed a day later, Edison demonstrated the reality of his forgiveness in the most powerful way possible. He walked over to the same boy, handed him the bulb, and said, "Take this up to the testing room."

Imagine how that boy must have felt.

He knew that he didn't deserve to be trusted with this responsibility again. Yet, here it was, being offered to him as though nothing had ever happened. Nothing could have restored this boy to the team more quickly, more convincingly, or more fully.

There is wisdom in the counsel that we should: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone" (Colossians 3:13) and in the Golden Rule: "That we should do to others as we would want them to do to us."

So the next time you have the opportunity to forgive someone who is genuinely sorry for their mistake, look them in the eye and with genuine respect and concern tell them, "I forgive you."

And then back up your words with actions.

Apologizing Well

The Strength to Forgive

Strength to Forgive

Even a minor offense can be like a bomb falling on a picnic. It destroys the tranquility of the relationship. If you're the one offended, you know how it feels: there's hurt, anger, disappointment, disbelief, a sense of betrayal and rejection. Whether the offender is a coworker, parent, or spouse, the question is, "how could they love me and say or do that?"

Forgiveness means we choose to lift the penalty, to pardon the offender. It means letting go of the offense and welcoming the offender back into your life. Forgiveness is not a feeling but a decision. It is the decision to continue growing in the relationship by removing the barrier.

If you are the offended party, forgiveness means that you will not seek revenge, that you will not demand justice, that you will not let the offense stand between the two of you. Forgiveness results in reconciliation.

Reconciliation means that the two of you have put the issue behind you and are now facing the future together.

So what do you do? How do you forgive? Forgiveness is granted before it's felt. Many people say, "I can't forgive them. I'm angry at them." In reality, we're angry at them because we won't forgive them. What does that mean? What it means is you just essentially refrain.

You refrain from sticking pins in them. You refrain from replaying your tapes, thinking about all the stuff they did. You refrain from trying to retaliate against them outside, but also you refrain from trying to retaliate inside. You refrain from your revenge fantasies. You refrain from what you'd like to see happen to them. When your mind starts going there, you turn it away.

You grant it long before you feel it, but you grant it. That is a sign of true strength



The Red Baron

The Red Baron was a fighter pilot with the German Air Force during World War I. He is considered the ace-of-aces of the war, being officially credited with 80 air combat victories.

Originally a cavalryman, Richthofen transferred to the Air Service in 1915. He quickly distinguished himself as a fighter pilot, and became leader of *Jasta 11* and then the larger fighter wing unit *Jagdgeschwader 1*, better known as "The Flying Circus" or "Richthofen's Circus" because of the bright colors of its aircraft, and perhaps also because of the way the unit was transferred from one area of allied air activity to another – moving like a travelling circus, and frequently setting up in tents on improvised airfields.

By 1918, Richthofen was regarded as a national hero in Germany, and respected by his enemies.

Strength



Lothar von Richthofen



Manfred von Richthofen

To be weak is to have no strength in a situation

To be meek is to have enormous strength in a situation ...
and to choose to keep it under control

Baron Lothar Von Richthofen was a WW1 ace with 40 confirmed kills. He shot down 10 planes in one month. He was known for aggressively attacking enemy forces, getting wounded, spending several months in a hospital, and then going out again. Today, this ace is a mere footnote in the history books.

His brother, Baron Manfred Von Richthofen, the Red Baron, is the Ace of Aces of WWI with 80 confirmed kills. He was very different than his brother. If he didn't KNOW he could win, he would fly away. He had phenomenal strength as a war-fighter and chose to keep it under control.

The Red Baron was 'meek' as a pilot ... and became a legend!

There is a saying that 'blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the world.'

As leaders, parents, spouses...our challenge is
to always be meek in our dealings with others

To lead with strength but strength kept under control

And in leading others in this way, we show our TRUE strength.

Family Traditions

Sharpening the Saw

Family Traditions

The dictionary defines entropy as “the steady degradation of a system or society.” Imagine how the entropic effect is multiplied by the forces of the physical and social weather we’re trying to navigate our families in. That’s why it is so necessary for every family to take the time to renew itself in the Four Pillars of Resilience : mental, physical, social and spiritual.

This is the exact same principle as in aviation. Aircraft have a need for constant refueling and maintenance. Pilots and crew need continual dedicated time for their training and upgrading of their skill levels. Even the most veteran pilots constantly practice the elemental and beginning steps and keep constantly updated on new technology in order to be current and prepared.

What are Family Traditions?

Family traditions include rituals and celebrations and meaningful events that you do in your family. They help you understand who you are: that you are part of a family that’s a strong unit, that you love one another, that you respect and honor one another, that you celebrate one another’s birthdays and special events, and make positive memories for everybody.

Why have Family Traditions?

Through traditions you reinforce the connection of the family. You give a feeling of belonging, of being supported, of being understood. You are committed to one another. You are a part of something that’s greater than yourself. You express and show loyalty to one another.

The Four Pillars of Resiliency

Mental: Approaching life’s challenges in a positive way by demonstrating self-control, stamina and good character with choices and actions; seeking help and offering help.

Physical: Performing and excelling in physical activities that require aerobic fitness, endurance, strength, flexibility and body composition derived through exercise, nutrition and training.

Social: Developing and maintaining trusted, valued friendships that are personally fulfilling and foster good communication, including exchange of ideas, views and experiences.

Spiritual: Strengthening a set of beliefs, principles or values that sustain an individual’s sense of well-being and purpose.

Spiritual fitness is about having a sense of purpose and meaning in your life. It’s as essential to an individual’s resiliency as esprit de corps is vital to a unit’s mission accomplishment.

In addition, in a family, any renewal activity done together builds relationships as well. For example, family members who exercise together not only build their individual physical strength and endurance but they also

increase bonding through doing physical activity together. Family members who read together multiply both learning and bonding through discussing and “piggybacking” ideas. Family members who worship and serve together

strengthen one another’s faith as well as their own. They become more unified and connected as they join together in a sacred expression of things that are important to them all.



Sharpening the Saw

Imagine for a moment that you’re trying to fell a tree. You’re swinging the blade through this huge, thick tree trunk. Back and forth, back and forth you pull the heavy saw. You’ve been laboring at it all day. You’ve hardly stopped for a minute. You’ve been working and sweating, and now you’re about halfway through. But you’re feeling so tired that you don’t see how you’re going to last another five minutes. You pause for a minute to catch your breath.

You look up and see another person a few yards away who has also been sawing a tree. You can’t believe your eyes! This person has sawed almost completely through his tree trunk! He started about the same time you did and his tree is about the same size as yours, but he stopped to rest every hour or so while you kept working away. Now, he’s almost through, and you’re only halfway there.

“What’s going on?” You ask incredulously. “How in the world have you gotten so much more done that I have? You didn’t even stay with it all the time. You stopped to rest every hour! How come?”

The man turns and smiles. “Yes,” he replies. “You saw me stop every hour to rest, but what you didn’t see was that every time I rested, I also sharpened the saw!”

Family Traditions

Ideas for Family Traditions

Family Tradition Ideas

Some ideas for starting family traditions:

Family Dinners

We all have to eat. The way to the heart, mind, and soul is often through the stomach. It takes careful thought and determination, but it's possible to organize meaningful mealtimes – times without electronic devices, television, without just gulping something down on the run. And it doesn't have to take forever, either, particularly if everyone does some part in the preparation and in the cleanup.

Family Vacations

Relaxation and fun are part of a great family life! There are few renewing forces in a family more powerful than a family vacation. Planning for it, anticipating it, and thinking about it – as well as discussing what happened on past vacations are enormously renewing for a family.

Holidays

Probably more than almost anything else, people remember and love family traditions around important holidays. They often come together from long distances and long separations. There's food. There's fun. There's laughter. There's sharing. And often there's a unifying theme or purpose.

Holidays provide an ideal time to build traditions. They happen every year. It's easy to create a sense of anticipation and fun as well as meaning and camaraderie around them.

Learning Together

A great way to learn together is to share in a family member's particular hobby or interest. Get involved in it. Learn about it. Read books. Join associations. Subscribe to magazines. Soak it up. Make it a focus. Talk about it together.



It was Christmas Eve 1968, and the crew of Apollo 8 was orbiting the moon. They did a live broadcast from their spaceship, garnering the largest TV audience ever at the time. The astronaut crew introduced themselves and described what it was like to see the moon so close.

Then one of the astronauts said, "We are now approaching lunar sunrise, and for all the people back on Earth, the crew of Apollo 8 has a message that we would like to send to you."

The three astronauts then took turns reading the first 10 verses of the first chapter of Genesis, which describes the creation of the world. They read it from the King James Version of the Bible.

When they finished, the last astronaut concluded, "and from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night, good luck, a Merry Christmas – and God bless all of you, all of you on the good Earth."

Learning together is socially and mentally renewing. It gives you a shared interest, something fun to talk about. There's joy in discovering and learning together. It can also be physically renewing when you learn a new sport or a new physical skill.

Learning together can be a wonderful tradition and one of the greatest joys of family life!

Worshipping Together

George Gallop reports that 95 percent of Americans believe in some form of supreme being or higher power, and that more than ever before, people are feeling the need to reach to find spiritual help. Research also clearly shows that worshipping together is one of the major characteristics of healthy, happy families. It can create context, unity, and shared understanding.

In addition, studies have shown that religious involvement is a significant factor in mental and emotional health and stability, particularly when individuals are internally motivated.

When they are extrinsically motivated – by public approval or conformity, for example – the religious context is not

always benevolent. In fact, it sometimes nurtures a culture that is extremely strict and sets unrealistically high expectations, causing people who are emotionally vulnerable can experience even more emotional problems.

But when the environment is focused on growth based on moral principles rather than on an outward perfectionism that reinforces rule-bound rigidity, people experience greater health. The culture allows for honest recognition of moral imperfections and acceptance of self, even as it encourages acceptance of and living in harmony with the principles that govern all of life.

Working Together

It used to be that families had to work together in order to survive, so work was something that kept families close. In today's society "work" often pulls families apart. You have parents going "off to work" in different directions – all of them away from home. You have children who don't really need to work economically and are growing up in a social environment that views work as a curse rather than as a blessing.

So creating the tradition of working together is really a matter of shaping positive, healthy views of work that will last a lifetime. Having a family garden, doing household chores together on a Saturday, volunteering – there are many ways to do it and many benefits of doing it.

Having Fun Together

Probably the most important dimension of all these traditions is having fun together – genuinely enjoying one another, enjoying the home environment, making home and family the happiest, biggest "warm fuzzy" in people's lives. Having fun together is so vital and so important that it could even be listed as a tradition in and of itself.



Statute of Walt Disney at Disneyland

Walt Disney's Vision

One of the great dreamers of the twentieth century was Walt Disney.

Back when Disney's two daughters were young, he used to take them to an amusement park in the Los Angeles area on Saturday mornings.

Disney was especially captivated by the carousel. As he approached it, he saw a blur of bright images racing around to the tune of energetic music. But when he got closer and the carousel stopped, he could see that his eyes had been fooled. He saw shabby horses with cracked and chipped paint. And he noticed that only the horses on the outside row moved up and down. The others stood lifeless, bolted to the floor.

The cartoonist's disappointment inspired him with a grand vision.

His vision that day became Disneyland.

**What is your vision? What is your vision for your life?
For your family? For your marriage? For your kids?
There is a saying that, "Where there is no vision the people perish."
(Proverbs 29:18)**

Are you willing to seize your vision, to sacrifice for it, to not let anything get in your way from it?

Creating a Family Mission Statement

Correcting for the Wind

Good families – even great families – are off track 90% of the time! The key is that they have a sense of destination. They know what the “track” looks like and they keep coming back to it time and again. It is like the flight of an airplane.

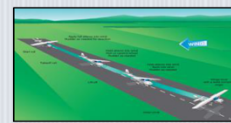
Now, how does this happen? During the flight, the pilots receive constant feedback. They receive information from instruments that read the environment, from control

towers and from other airplanes. Based on that feedback, they make adjustments so that time and again, they keep making small corrections.

The flight of that airplane is the ideal metaphor for family life. With regard to our families, it doesn't make any difference if we are off target or even if our family is a mess. The hope lies in the vision and in the plan and in the ability to turn back to it again and again.

Your family is going to be off track 90 percent of the time...

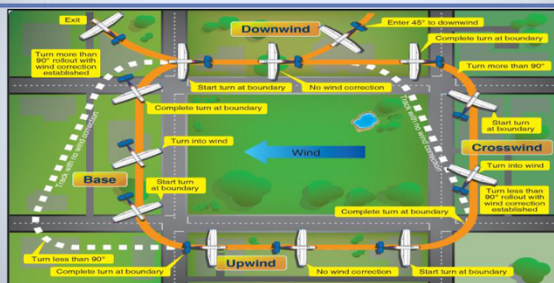
So What?



Good families – even great families – are off track 90 percent of the time! The key is that they have a sense of destination. They know what the “track” looks like. And they keep coming back to it time and time again.

The hope lies in the vision and the ability to turn back to it again and again.

Planning for the Winds



Creating a Family Mission Statement

Charting Your Course

Having your destination clearly in mind affects every decision along the way!

To use a business management term, a great way to accomplish this is through the creation of a “family mission statement.” What is this? A family mission statement is a combined, unified expression from all family members of what your family is all about and the principles you choose to govern your family life. Put another way, it is a concise written statement which

answers the fundamental questions for your family:

What kind of family do we really want to be?

What kind of home would you like to invite your friends to?

What embarrasses you about our family?

What makes you feel comfortable here?

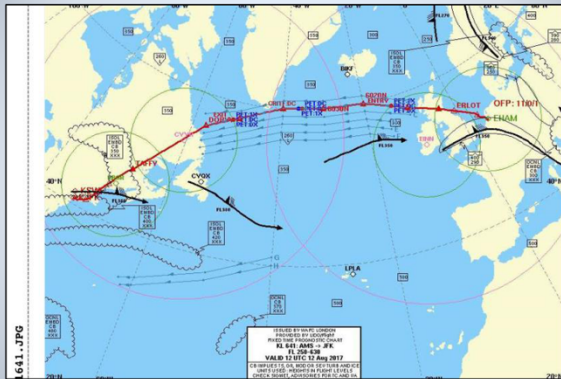
What makes you want to come home?

For the most part, families don't have the kind of mission statement so critical to organizational success.



Yet family is the most important, fundamental organization in the world. It is the literal building block of society. No civilization has ever survived its breakup. No other institution can fulfill its essential purpose. No other institution has had its impact for good or ill.

We can create a vision for what we want our family to be like, what we will live by, and what we will stand for.



What makes you feel drawn to us as parents 'so that you are open to our influence?'

What makes us feel open to your influence?

What do we want to be remembered by?

There is a saying that "without vision the people perish." Perhaps, tonight you could just go and ask each member of your family individually, "What is the purpose of our family? What is this family about?" Ask your spouse, "What is

the purpose of our marriage? What is its essential reason for being? What are its high priority goals?" You may be surprised by the answers that you receive.

What is a 'family value?'

Say, for example, that it is decided that education is a value in your family. A lot of parents set this as a hope for their children. You decide that a priority in your family is for your children to work in school and get as much education as possible, and not take

shortcuts to simply get grades and diplomas. So, you would read together as a family. You would organize your home so that your children had a time and a place to do homework. You would make the effort to become interested in what your children are learning in school and give them opportunities to teach you what they are learning. You would choose to focus on learning, not grades, and encourage them to continually grow.

Creating a Family Mission Statement

A Destination and a Compass

A family mission statement provides a destination and a compass. The mission statement itself gives a clear, shared vision of the destination where the entire family wants to go. It can be a map and a compass that guides you for years through the journey of family life. You can place it on a wall in your family room. You can look at it often and ask yourself, "How well are we living up to what we have decided to be and to do? Is our home really a place where we all

know and feel that we are loved and accepted? Are we being cynical and critical? Do we use cutting humor? Do we walk out on each other and not communicate? Are we giving back or only taking?

Our sense of destination also allows us to better understand our present situation and to realize that the ends and means are inseparable; in other words, the ends and the means are the same



The mission statement itself gives a clear, shared vision of the destination where we as a family want to go. It can be a map and a compass that guides you for years through the journey of family life.

In reality, the ends and the means – the destination and the journey – are the same

Creating a Family Mission Statement

The Checklist

Step One: Explore What Your Family is All About

The goal here is to get everyone's feelings and ideas out on the table. Depending on the situation, you may choose any one of a variety of ways to do this.

If your family is just you and your spouse at this point, you may want to go someplace where you can be alone together for a couple of days or even just a few hours. Enjoy some time just relaxing and being together. When the atmosphere is right, you may want to try to envision together what you want your relationship to be ten, twenty-five, or fifty years down the road. You may want to seek inspiration by reflecting on the words spoken as part of your marriage ceremony. If you can't remember them, you could make it a point to listen when you attend the weddings of relatives and friends.

You might also discuss together questions such as these:

What kind of marriage partners do we want to be?

*How do we want to treat
each other?*

*How do we want to
resolve our differences?*

How do we want to handle our finances?

*What kind of parents do
we want to be?*

What principles do we want to teach our children to help them prepare for adulthood and to lead responsible, caring lives?

*How do we help develop
the potential talent of
each child?*

*What kind of discipline
do we want to use with
our children?*



All of us know the famous B-17 used during WWII, which helped to win the war. You may not know, however, that it was the first aircraft to get a checklist!

This came about when, on the first B-17 flight, three men were seriously injured, and a few later died, when the aircraft stalled soon after take-off. After investigation, it was found that the pilot had left the elevator lock on, and the aircraft was unresponsive to pitch control.

What roles (earning, financial management, housekeeping, and so on) will each of us have?

How can we best relate to each other's families?

What traditions do we bring with us from the families in which we were raised?

What traditions do we want to keep and create?

What intergenerational traits or tendencies are we happy or unhappy with, and how do we make changes?

How do we want to give back?

The reason that a mission statement is so important in a marriage is that no two people are completely alike. There are always differences. When

you put two people together in this most tender, sensitive, and intimate relationship called marriage, if you don't take the time to explore these differences and create a sense of shared vision, then these differences can drive them apart.

Whatever method you use, remember that the process is as important as the product.

The First Checklist

In 1935, the B-17 was challenging a few other companies for large government contracts that could mean either the demise or the success of Boeing. Therefore, Boeing set out to find out what they could do to improve the safety of the B-17.

During a major think-tank session, it was determined that the pilots needed a checklist. It wasn't a knock to the pilots, or that the aircraft was too hard to fly, rather the aircraft was just too complex for a pilot's memory.



Creating a Family Mission Statement

Human Factors Strategy

Stopping Conflict Before it Starts!

If you carefully consider the problems people face in marriage, you will find that in almost every case they arise out of *conflicting role expectations* and are *exacerbated by conflicting problem-solving strategies*.

A husband may think it's his wife's role to take care of finances; after all, his mother did. The wife may think that is her husband's role, since her father filled that role when she was growing up. This may not be a big problem until they try to solve it and their problem-solving scripts come to the surface.

He is a "passive aggressive." He slowly boils inside and says nothing, but is continuously judging and becomes increasingly irritated. She is an "active aggressive." She wants to talk it out, thrash it out, fight it out. They both

blame each other. Thus, a small problem becomes a larger one; a mole-hill becomes a mountain. It may even become a mountain range because conflicting problem-solving scripts compound every problem and magnify every difference.

"The power of co-missioning is that it literally transcends "your way" or "my way." It creates a new way, a higher way – "our way."

Much of our pre-conceived ideas of role expectations and problem-solving strategies come from our families of origin. They tend to be caught over time during our developmental years rather than taught. Self-awareness is the key to understanding both.



"If you carefully consider the problems people face in marriage, you will find that in almost every case they arise out of conflicting role expectations and problem solving strategies"



This coming together – this sharing and agreeing upon role expectations, problem-solving strategies, vision, and values in a relationship – is called “co-missioning.” In other words, it’s a comingling or

joining of missions or purposes. It’s binding them so that they have the same destination.

The power of it is that it transcends “your way” or “my way.” It creates a new

way, a higher way – “our way.” It enables marriage partners to work together to explore differences and to resolve problems in ways that build relationships up and bring positive results

The Origin of Crew Resource Management

Crew resource management or cockpit resource management (CRM) is a set of training procedures for use in environments where human error can have devastating effects. Used primarily for improving air safety, CRM focuses on interpersonal communication, leadership, and decision making in the cockpit of an airliner.

The pioneer of CRM was David Beaty, a former Royal Air Force pilot and later a BOAC (British Overseas Airways Corporation) pilot who wrote the book, *The Human Factor in Aircraft Accidents* in the late 1950's.

Crew Resource Management training formally began with a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recommendation made during their investigation of the 1978 United Airlines Flight 173 crash. The issues surrounding that crash included a DC-8 crew running out of fuel over Portland, Oregon while troubleshooting a landing gear problem.

The term "cockpit resource management" (later generalized to "crew resource management") was coined in 1979 by NASA psychologist John Lauber who had studied communication processes in cockpits for several years. While retaining a command hierarchy, the concept was intended to foster a less authoritarian cockpit culture, where co-pilots were encouraged to question captains if they observed them making mistakes.



Creating a Family Mission Statement

The Little Aviators

Family Mission Statements for Families with Children

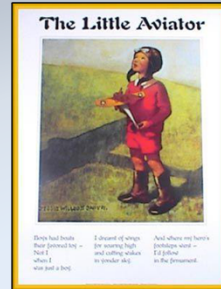
The importance of a mission statement becomes even more evident when there are children in the family. Now you have people who need to have a sense of belonging, who need to be taught and trained – people who will be influenced in many different ways through their growing-up years. Without some unifying sense of vision and values, they may well be bouncing off the walls with no sense of family identity or purpose. So, again, a family mission statement becomes supremely important.

When children are young, they generally love to be included in the process of creating the mission statement. They love sharing their ideas and helping to create something that gives them a sense of family identity.

“Every New Year’s Eve we sit down and work on our mission statement and write out goals for the coming year.”

What a wonderful experience for children – to know that their ideas and feelings are valued and that they are a vital part of making their family all that it can be!

Now, when teenagers are involved, the effort to create a family mission statement may be a little more complex. In fact, you may even initially meet with some resistance. Some older children may not be interested at first. They may want to hurry and get it over with quickly. They may not see the reason for taking so much time to talk about such serious things. The key is to find ways to lighten it up and to keep coming back to it. In time, their interest in it will grow.



Some tips to follow during the discussion

1. First, listen with respect
2. Second, restate accurately to show you understand
3. Third, consider writing down the ideas



As you discuss these questions, you will probably hear a variety of responses. Remember that everybody in the family is important. Everybody's ideas are important. You may have to deal with all kinds of positive and negative expressions. Don't judge them. Respect them. Let them be expressed freely. Don't try to resolve everything. All you're doing at this point is preparing minds and hearts to think reflectively. In a sense you're preparing to sow the first seeds.

“No involvement, no commitment”

If nothing else were gained from this process, the mere act of spending the time, of listening to one another, and of relating on such a deep level would have tremendous benefits alone.

The process can also be very enjoyable. Initially, it may feel a little uncomfortable. It may throw people a little out of their comfort zone because they've never become

involved with others in such a deep, reflective discussion. The key is to press on knowing that as they do become involved, a kind of excitement begins to develop.

The communication becomes very authentic and the bonding becomes very deep. Slowly, almost imperceptibly perhaps, within the hearts and minds of family members, the substance of the mission statement itself begins to come into focus.

Questions that you can ask your family

What is the purpose of our family?

What kind of family do we want to be?

What kinds of things do we want to do?

What kind of relationships do we want to have with one another?

How do we want to treat one another and speak to one another?

What things are truly important to us as a family?

What are the unique talents, gifts, and abilities of family members?

What are our responsibilities as family members?

What families inspire us and why do we admire them?

How can we serve others as a family?

Creating a Family Mission Statement

Flight Planning

Step Two: Writing Your Family Mission Statement

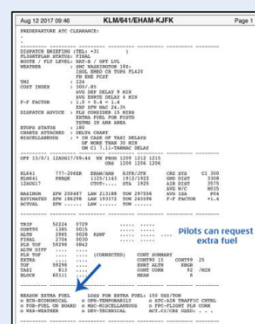
With ideas out on the table, you're now ready to have someone in the family refine and distill and pull them all together into some kind of expression that will reflect the collective feeling of the hearts and minds of those who have contributed.

In one sense, it is extremely important to get this expression down on paper. The very process of writing brings a crystallization of thought and distills learning and insights into words. It also imprints the brain and reinforces learning, and it makes the expression visible and available to everyone in the family.

Whatever you come up with at first will be a rough draft – possibly the first of many drafts. Family members will need to look at it, think about it, live

with it, discuss it, make changes. They will need to work with it until everyone comes to agreement: “This is what this family is about. This is our mission. We believe it. We buy into it. We are ready to commit to live it.”

Keep in mind that a mission statement doesn't have to be some big, formal document. It can even be a word or a phrase, or something creative and entirely different such as an image or symbol. Some families have written a family song that embodies what matters most to them. Others have captured a sense of vision through poetry and art. There are families that have structured their mission statement by building phrases around each letter of their last name. One family gets a powerful sense of vision from a four-foot stick. This stick goes straight for some distance and then suddenly corkscrews and gnarls at



the end. This serves as a reminder to this family that, “when you pick up one

end of the stick, you pick up the other.” In other words, the choices you make have

consequences, so make your choices carefully.

Examples of Family Mission Statements

The mission of our family is to create a nurturing place of faith, order, truth, love, happiness, and relaxation, and to provide opportunity for each individual to become responsibly independent, and effectively interdependent, in order to serve worthy purposes in society.

Our family mission:

To love each other...

To help each other...

To believe in each other...

To wisely use our time, talents, and resources to bless others...

To worship together...

Forever.

Our family is happy and has fun together.

We all feel secure and feel a sense of belonging.

We support each other fully in our seen and unseen potential.

We show unconditional love in our family and inspiration for each other.

We are a family where we can continually grow in mental, physical, social / emotional, and spiritual ways.

We discuss and discover all aspects of life.

We are a family that serves each other and the community.

We appreciate the grace of God.

We hope to leave a legacy of the strength and importance of family

Creating a Family Mission Statement

Flying Your Course

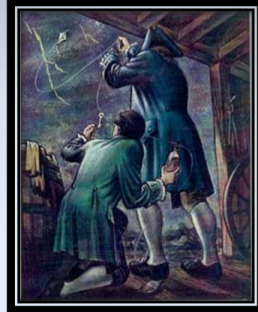
Step Three: Use It to Stay on Track

A mission statement is not some “to do” to check off your list. It’s meant to be a literal constitution of your family life. Just as the United States Constitution has survived for more than two hundred sometimes turbulent years, your family constitution can be the foundational document that will unify and hold your family together for decades – even generations – to come.

A mission statement will create a powerful bonding between parents and children, between husbands and wives that simply does not exist when there’s no sense of shared vision and values. It’s like the difference between diamond and a piece of

graphite. They are both made of the same material, but a diamond is among the hardest of all substances while graphite can be split apart. The difference lies in the depth of bonding between the individual atoms.

You may well find that the challenge of creating a family mission statement will drive you to do the inner work you need to do to have your own vision and values clear. You may also discover that this challenge will drive you back into your relationship with your spouse – this very fundamental relationship out of which everything else in the family grow.



“We stand at a crossroads, each minute, each hour, each day, making choices. We choose the thoughts we allow ourselves to think, the passions we allow ourselves to feel, and the actions we allow ourselves to perform. Each choice is made in the context of whatever value system we’ve selected to govern our lives. In selecting that value system, we are, in a very real way, making the most important choice we will ever make.”

~ Benjamin Franklin

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Professional

Texas Air National Guard: Chaplain (Major), July 2009

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Military Assignments

1. June 2008 – July 2008, Chaplain (Candidate), United States Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO

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